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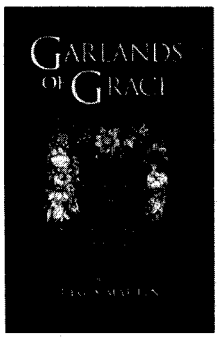

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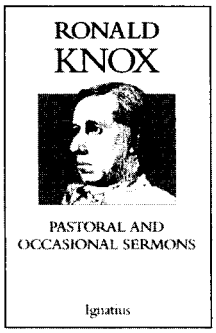

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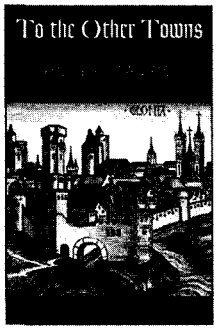

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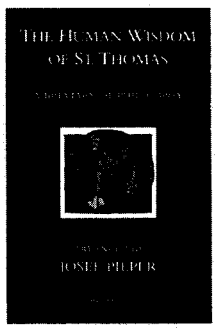

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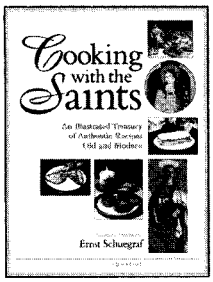

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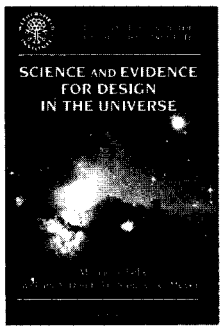

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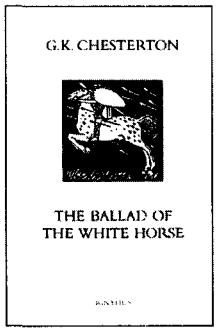

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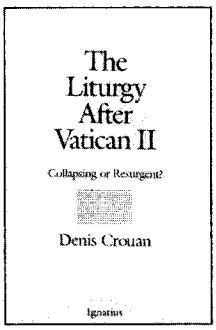

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Who Is a Jew?

In his article "Jews, Christians, and Civil Society" (February), David Novak categorically states that the religious beliefs of an individual Jew have no effect on whether or not that individual is indeed a Jew.

Professor Novak writes: "Even nonreligious Jews, even atheistic Jews, are part of the Jewish people *because to be a Jew is to be a member of a community elected by God*. . . . It is God who makes a Jew a Jew. It is not a human choice. . . . Thus those who repudiate their obligation to keep the Torah—that is Judaism—may have left Judaism in practice but they are still part of Judaism by their very existence. . . . Election begins at birth; it thus precedes any choice on the part of the Jew. . . . It is only a modern voluntaristic view . . . that supposes that being a Jew . . . is an individual option that is initiated or terminated by human will."

This argument appears to put Prof. Novak at odds with essentially all of Orthodox Judaism relative to Messianic Jews. According to his argument, the acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah (an act of "human will") by individual Jews does not terminate their Judaism. Every Orthodox Jewish writer I have read denies that Messianic Jews are Jews. Although Messianic Jews claim to still be Jews, Orthodox Jews categorically reject this, saying that their acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah makes them non-Jews.

Have I missed something, or is Prof. Novak's thinking relatively unique in the Jewish community?

Forrest H. Scott
Middletown, Ohio

David Novak replies:

Mr. Scott has read my article with great care, for which I thank him. Nevertheless, he misunderstands the stance of Orthodox Judaism regarding Jews who convert to any other religion, including Christianity. (And since the second century, Christianity has been another religion for all orthodox Jews.) By "orthodox" Judaism, I mean the Judaism of those Jews, whether or not they are formally affiliated with "Orthodox Judaism" as a particular denomination (mostly in North America), which affirms that the Torah is the revealed word of God and whose normative interpretation is found in the rulings of the rabbis of the Talmud as determined by the classical rabbinic codes.

Although there were some rabbinic opinions after the closing of the text of the Talmud that suggested that a Jew who converts to another religion does remove himself or herself from the Jewish people altogether, since the eleventh century all rabbinic decisors have followed the opinion of the great French authority Rashi of Troyes, who ruled that the talmudic dictum, "even when she sins Israel is still Israel" (Sanhedrin 44a), applies not only to the Jewish people as a whole (contrary to Christian supersessionism), but also to every individual Jew.

That is the case even when an individual Jew commits one of the worst sins possible: apostasy. That is why even today no formal rite of reconversion is required, or even allowed, in the case of an apostate Jew returning to the traditional Jewish community of belief and practice. Such a person has never really left the community existentially. (That person's status in the world-to-come, though, might well be different.) As I pointed out in my article, such Jews "have gone AWOL, but they may not be court-martialed."

Not only are Jewish apostates still part of the Jewish people, they are also still part of Judaism (i.e., the Torah and Jewish tradition) inas-

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much as their apostasy does not alleviate them of their obligation to observe all the commandments, especially the commandment to repent of their sins. Jewish apostates are not, of course, acting in accordance with normative Judaism when they, say, practice Christianity. But they are still part of the Jewish people. This is no different in principle from saying that a Jew who violates the Sabbath is not practicing Judaism, but this violation of the Torah and its tradition does not thereby remove one from the Jewish people and from the obligation of all Jews to keep the Sabbath. The specific practical difference is that even most orthodox Jewish communities would not deny certain Jewish privileges to a Sabbath violator, such as the privilege of being buried in a Jewish cemetery, privileges they would deny to an apostate.

On the other hand, I agree with those rabbinic decisors who acknowledge Christianity to be a legitimate service of the One True God *for gentiles*. This is no different than the recognition of the validity of Jewish service of this same God by Vatican Council II, something that could not be permitted to baptized Christians. In other words, even though Jews happily accept Christians (and any other gentiles) who sincerely choose to convert to Judaism and become part of the Jewish people, there is no explicit obligation, either theological or moral, for them to do so.

I suspect that Mr. Scott may have been misled by a certain hyperbole often used by orthodox Jews when speaking against Jews who have become Christians, especially those Jewish Christians who think they can practice both Christianity and Judaism in tandem. Such hyperbole can be explained, even if not justified, by painful Jewish experiences of Christian proselytizing efforts that have, and in some cases still do, target Jews, telling them that Christianity is "completed" Judaism. Moreover, Mr. Scott may have also been misled by recent statements of some Orthodox rabbis in North America saying that Reform, Conservative, and Reconstructionist Jews are not practicing Judaism. While I agree with the criticism of the essentially antinomian stand of these three Jewish denominations, not only are most of their members Jews by the traditional definition of birth to a Jewish mother, they can hardly be said to be practicing another religion, as are Jewish Christians. One can only say that their interpretation of the Torah and its tradition is both incoherent and inadequate to the data these non-orthodox Jews appropriate. (They would probably say much the same about the more orthodox appropriation of the Jewish tradition.) In both these cases, some modern Jewish spokespersons have not sufficiently heeded the dicta of the ancient rabbis, who warned their students and successors, "Be deliberate in judgment," and "Be careful with your words lest one derive falsehood from them."

Satinover v. Barr

I suppose I should appreciate much of Stephen M. Barr's largely favorable review of my book *The Quantum Brain* (November 2001). But, in truth, I'd have preferred a scathing denunciation, were it of what I actually wrote. The argument he lavishly praises as both "ingenious" yet also "totally fallacious"—indeed, the very book he characterizes as both "audacious" and "wrong, implausible, or unpersuasive"—is not a book I would be willing to write, nor did.

Professor Barr complains that "nowhere in [the] book is a single word of argumentation to be found for or against the proposition that man is a machine." My responses are these: 1) Using the arguments of science, *that man can be shown not to be a machine is the entire book.* 2) Nowhere in Prof. Barr's review is to be found a single fact (nor arrangement of facts) to refute anything I actually wrote, merely flat assertion of praise or condemnation. 3) Prof. Barr puts his argument against the proposition that man is a machine in the form of a question: "Why not simply start with the evident fact of free will?" Start? That finishes the argument, too, most ineffectively.

Prof. Barr further writes: "As we have seen, Satinover arrive[s] at the . . . conclusion 'that man is a machine.'" What? *We* have seen no such thing because I never wrote any such thing; indeed, I took up the entire text arguing the opposite. Prof. Barr attributes the argument to me by quoting and bracketing and eliding my quotes of others I argue *against.* For readers who might be interested, let me summarize what *The Quantum Brain* actually says; they may then judge for themselves. I'd rather my actual arguments turn out wrong than imagined ones attributed to me turn out right.

First, I lay out in detail the scientific arguments that allow the vast majority of scientists to conclude that, in the words of Jacques Monod, the father of modern molecular biology, "man is a machine." As with Gresham's law ("good money and bad cannot circulate together—the latter invariably displaces the former"), these bad arguments have trickled down to displace the earlier ones that said man is, in fact, not a machine. But however bad, the machine argument is extremely clever—far more clever than its detractors usually take account of or appreciate. Prof. Barr complains that "in Satinover's view atoms are definitely 'free,' but it remains to be seen whether we are." But I was quoting Henri Poincaré and Frederick Belinzano, and the point I was making is that most physicists and mathematicians find it a great deal easier to imagine atoms as truly free than people. I did not say that I do.

Second, I pointed out that it is worthless these days merely to assert, as does Prof. Barr, that free will is self-evident. More exactly, it does no good to attack scientific reductionism—from whose material successes its ene-

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mies have benefited as much as its allies—with weapons that convince precisely no one save those to whom the anti-reductionist position is a priori self-evident. So I make the man-is-machine argument as forcefully as possible. I daresay that I make it a good deal better than do the vast majority of its *defenders*, so as to defeat it at its strengths, not merely at its weaknesses. (That's why I had no trouble gaining endorsements from outstanding and accomplished scientists.)

But what really galls me is that Prof. Barr does much more mind-reading than reviewing: "[Satinover] believes that he has found . . ."; "Satinover believes he has succeeded . . ."; "He is convinced . . ."; "He finds this . . ."; "He does not want . . ."; "He wants . . ."; "Satinover feels he has to resort . . ."; "The reason Satinover does not . . ."; "he is not quite sure . . ."; "he is sure . . ."; "He believes . . ."; "he appears to doubt . . ."; "Satinover seems to appreciate. . . ."

Allow me to indulge in a bit of the same nonsense. At the outset Prof. Barr states: "Although a psychoanalyst by profession, [Satinover] writes with an impressive level of knowledge and sophistication about all these disciplines [neuroscience, computer science and physics]." Okay, thanks. That I have been a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst by profession is true; the rest may or may not be. But Prof. Barr goes on: "Satinover is a psychiatrist, so I presume that he believes in the Unconscious. It is the existence of the Conscious he appears to doubt." Prof. Barr doesn't have the foggiest notion of what I believe in. But if he is determined to display clairvoyance, why doesn't he become a genuine psychiatrist instead of practicing armchair psychoanalysis in the guise of a book review? Believe me, becoming a professional in the field should swiftly disabuse him of the need to capitalize *any* of its ever-metamorphosing concepts, no matter how fashionable—and it will also teach him that mind-reading is at once impossible and ill-mannered.

And yes, what's good for the goose is good for the gander. After four years of preparation, I am now a full-time graduate student in physics at Yale, pursuing a Ph.D. and actually involved in the research I write about. Why Prof. Barr would construct such a misrepresentation is wholly beyond me as a doctoral student of physics, though it might not have been beyond me as a psychiatrist.

At the center of the book, just as materialism, reductionism, and mechanistic analysis appear to have won, I offer an analogy with military science.

> Nearly all the battles which are regarded as the masterpieces of the military art . . . have been battles of maneuver in which very often the enemy has found himself defeated by some novel expedient or device, some queer, swift, unexpected thrust or stratagem . . . an element of legerdemain, an original and sinister touch, which leaves the enemy puzzled as well as beaten. . . . The object . . . is to find easier ways, other than sheer slaughter, of achieving the main purpose.

My variation of the argument goes as follows: let us examine mankind from a distance, as wholly admixed with and indistinguishable from the thin veneer of biological slime that coats the planet Earth. (Please, Prof. Barr, this is a debating tactic. Don't henceforth quote me as believing that mankind is bioslime.) We observers note that as a product of laboratory experiments in quantum mechanics—if nothing else—this bioslime has irrefutably generated actions on a visible scale that are wholly indeterminate. Nothing in the physical universe has caused them, though they proceed to generate effects (themselves therefore being "uncaused causes," their effects being wholly unpredicated by any antecedent physical events). The argument as to whether "free will" on an everyday scale can possibly exist has been demonstrated—and that's exactly what scientists have long argued is either utterly impossible or fundamentally beyond demonstration. It's been sitting there right under our noses ever since quantum theory became quantum experiment.

Now, this argument Prof. Barr characterizes as "very original," "highly ingenious," and "totally fallacious." Conceding for the moment its originality and ingeniousness, just what is it that's "totally fallacious"? According to Prof. Barr, it is the conclusion that, since human brains concocted quantum theory and experiment, therefore "human brains are quantum amplifiers" and operate according to quantum principles. "A brain may make use of telephones," Barr objects, "without *being* a telephone."

But I agree, of course. That human brains are themselves quantum devices does *not* follow from the observation that human brains use quantum devices; nor even from the fact that human brains alone are, in all the universe so far as we know, the only large-scale physical systems that do so; nor even from the further fact that human brains alone have created such devices. Nor did I make such a claim based on mere cleverness. The entire second half of the book, rather, is devoted to *making that argument on the facts and evidence and reasoning, as well as on meticulously documented research experiments.* But on the flaws or merits of this effort Barr is utterly silent.

Why did I place this little bit of "ingeniousness" where I did? Because, once you understand (on rational grounds, not merely because it "feels" like it must be so) that bioslime is in fact capable of freedom, and that this freedom is quantum in nature, a critical battle has been won: for life, freedom is real. All that's left to debate is at what scale of biological organization this freedom arises, and how. The debate is not only intrinsically fascinating, both philosophically and theologically. From the specifics of

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the "how," I show (in detail utterly disregarded by Prof. Barr) the technologies of our future that are now emerging, for good and ill. Traditionalists argue fiercely as to whether Harry Potter's entirely imagined ability to teleport broomsticks is a sufficiently wholesome fantasy for modern children to daydream about. Hogwarts, as everyone knows, doesn't exist, and can't. So the children daydream about attending Hogwarts and the adults debate their dreams.

Meanwhile, my colleagues and I, and others in increasing numbers, are, for example, forcing dust-sized bits of matter to exist in two places at once, and using such impossibilities to create computers that seem to exist simultaneously in 2, 4, 6, 8, 16 . . . universes at once, each playing out a different expression of the possibilities of free will.

I find myself wishing that Prof. Barr had deemed *The Quantum Brain* not merely fallacious, but "nutty." That, at least, would have captured the spirit of what's actually happening these days, as corporations of nerds quietly set about causing hardware to evolve solutions neither dreamed of nor comprehensible by the humans who set the process going.

Jeffrey Satinover
Weston, Connecticut

Stephen M. Barr replies:

Placing the tips of my fingers on Dr. Satinover's letter and closing my eyes, I summon all my quantum clairvoyant powers. Yes, I now begin to sense something, very faintly, in the vibrations of the ether. What is it? Dissatisfaction? Displeasure? Perhaps annoyance? My fingertips begin to burn; I withdraw them hastily from the paper.

All right, as FIRST THINGS readers will have begun to suspect, my mind-reading powers are a fraud. They are not based upon some peculiarity of my brain, able to exist in 2, 4, 8, or 16 universes at once. No, they are based upon a cheap trick, and a very old one at that. The way I find out a person's beliefs, attitudes, and opinions is by reading what he himself says about them.

In the interests of brevity I will give just one example of how I work this trick. The fourth in Dr. Satinover's list of my clairvoyant utterances is the phrase, "he finds this." The whole sentence as it appeared in my review was, "And yet he finds this idea disquieting." I was saying that Dr. Satinover was disquieted by the idea that man is a machine. Now it happens that on page 99 of his book, Dr. Satinover writes, "In showing that he [i.e., man] is more particularly a *computing* machine, science has taken an enormous and exciting step forward. . . . But as exciting as such developments are to most scientists, and to most people with a scientific bent, they are also disconcerting." Perhaps I did take some liberty in using the word "disquieting" instead of "disconcerting," but if this is mindreading it is mindreading of a very low order.

The much more serious accusation made by Dr. Satinover is that I fundamentally misrepresented his book. In particular, I am supposed to have attributed to him the view that man is a machine when it was the whole purpose of his book to attack that idea. This misrepresentation I am supposed to have achieved by "quoting and bracketing and eliding" his "quotes of others" whom he is in reality arguing against. Exhibit A for the case against me is this statement from my review: "As we have seen, Satinover 'arrive[s] at the . . . conclusion' that man is a machine." To which, Dr. Satinover replies, "What? *We* have seen no such thing because I never wrote any such thing." Well, let us see.

As exhibit A for the defense I enter this statement of Dr. Satinover's, to be found on page 98 of his book, which I now quote without any brackets or elisions: "Looking back at the territory we've covered, we will therefore arrive at the following conclusion: Man is a machine." Is Dr. Satinover here quoting others? No, neither directly nor indirectly. He makes this statement *in propria persona*. Did I take his statement out of context? No, for in my review I explained the context. After quoting this statement of his, I *immediately* made the comment that Dr. Satinover is "disquieted" by such an idea, and that he is not satisfied with the conclusion that man is "*just* a machine" in part because it seems to leave no room for human free will. I then went on to say, "This is where the second key idea of the book, 'quantum indeterminacy,' comes into play. Quantum theory, Satinover suggests, will rescue us from mere mechanism." After explaining why many people say that quantum indeterminacy cannot rescue us from mere mechanism or allow any scope for free will, I said, "It is this well-known argument that Satinover attempts to overcome in the second half of his book." It seems to me, therefore, that very few readers of my review are likely to miss the point that a main purpose of Dr. Satinover's book is to argue for the possibility of human freedom and to argue against "mere mechanism" and the notion that man is "*just* a machine."

However, there is a point in all this that really is subtle and likely to cause confusion. As I understand Dr. Satinover's book, his answer to the conclusion that man is a machine is not simply to negate it, but to qualify it. It is not simply to say that man is *not* a machine, but to suggest that man is a very peculiar *kind* of machine, namely a quantum machine, and as such able to act in ways that one does not think of as machine-like. In particular, man can act non-deterministically, so that he is not a mere "mechanistic machine," to use a phrase that appears in the book. In fact, Dr. Satinover refers at one point to possible future artificial quantum brains as "machines that are not really machines."

Thus, it is not at all clear (at least to me) where Dr. Satinover's picture of the human brain really leaves us with regard to the question whether man

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is a machine. The dust jacket of *The Quantum Brain* says, "Satinover also makes two predictions: We will soon construct artificial devices as free and aware as we are; and we will likewise soon begin a startling reevaluation of just who and what we are, of our place in the universe, and, perhaps, even of God." If machines can be artificially constructed that have superhuman intelligence and freedom, as Dr. Satinover suggests in many passages of his book may be possible and even likely, then where is this line between man and machine?

This brings me to another of my supposed misrepresentations. I attributed to Dr. Satinover the idea that atoms are "free," whereas (according to his letter) he was only quoting Poincaré and Belinzano. However, the words I cited in my review, which included the phrase "the freedom that quantum systems alone appear to possess," were *not* quotes from Poincaré, Belinzano, or anybody else. In fact, Dr. Satinover makes quite a number of statements throughout his book that appear to attribute "freedom" to matter. For instance, on page 174 he writes, "The only known source of perfect freedom of action resides in the quantum nature of matter." The ideas of "indeterminacy" and "freedom" tend to be conflated in many passages. What he means by freedom, and whether or how it should be distinguished from mere indeterminacy, is left very murky.

Dr. Satinover would have preferred me—oh, there I go again!—to have found his book "nutty." I did not find it nutty. However, I do find his letter attacking my review a bit obscure. Anyway, I can make little of it.

Ominous Antecedents

Thank you to Richard John Neuhaus for writing about his encounter with the bioethicist Peter Singer at a university-sponsored debate ("A Curious Encounter With a Philosopher from Nowhere," Public Square, February). I noted with disgust that, as he always does, Singer wrapped himself in his Jewish heritage as a defense against his advocacy of infanticide being labeled "Nazi-like." In actuality, the comparison to his thinking and that which led to the euthanasia Holocaust circa 1939-1945 is entirely apt.

The first officially sanctioned infanticide in Germany occurred in 1939 after the father of a disabled baby, "Baby Knauer," wrote to Chancellor Hitler seeking permission to have his son euthanized. Hitler, believing the time was ripe to begin eradicating the "defectives," sent his physician, Dr. Karl Brandt, to inform Baby Knauer's doctors that there would be no legal consequence for killing the infant. This was done, so pleasing Hitler that he issued a secret directive licensing doctors to kill disabled infants.

In *The Nazi Doctors*, Robert J. Lifton quotes a 1973 interview in which the father of Baby Knauer recalled the reasons Brandt and Hitler agreed to the killing of his son:

> He [Brandt] explained to me that the Führer had personally sent him, and that my son's case interested him very much. The Führer wanted to explore the problem of people who had no future—whose [lives were] worthless. From then on, we wouldn't have to suffer from this terrible misfortune, because the Führer had granted us the mercy killing of our son. Later, we could have other children, handsome and healthy, of whom the Reich could be proud.

Peter Singer's philosophical rationale for infanticide is indistinguishable from that stated by Brandt to Baby Knauer's father. Writing in his book *Practical Ethics* about the rightness of killing a hemophiliac infant, Singer states:

> When the death of a disabled infant will lead to the birth of another infant with better prospects for a happy life, the total amount of happiness will be greater if the disabled infant is killed. The loss of a happy life for the first infant is outweighed by the gain of a happier life for the second [even if not yet born]. Therefore, if killing the hemophiliac infant has no adverse effect on others, according to the total view, it would be right to kill him.

What a difference fifty years makes: Brandt was hanged after the Nuremberg Trials. Peter Singer holds a prestigious tenured chair in bioethics at Princeton University.

Wesley J. Smith
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Resisting Evil With Words and Weapons

Thank you for a superb February issue.

A number of years ago, while teaching at a university in Vermont, I was invited to join a public affairs panel to discuss just war issues. I soon discovered that I was the sole supporter of that notion, and I was getting much more than I was giving. Indeed, the audience seemed hostile, not only to the concept of just war, but also to me. An elderly man in the rear of the audience stood and said something to the effect that he wanted to support my views on just war; he added that he was a classical musician. I remember thinking to myself that there was one person in the room who agreed with me—and that he was probably a nut. "I want to tell you," the man continued, "what is the sweetest music I have ever heard." I was still mentally cringing. "Although I have heard wonderful music thousands of times, the most beautiful was the sound of U.S. Army tanks. You see, they were coming to [the death camp which then held him as a young man], and that sound meant that I would be able to grow up." The audi-

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ence and I had the grace to sit in silent reflection for a few moments, and I felt rather like Edward Everett must have at Gettysburg.

Those tanks resisted Nazi evil—and saved thousands, perhaps even hundreds of thousands. Father Neuhaus resisted Peter Singer's evil—and, by his continuing example and eloquence, saves, we pray, thousands more. But there is the rub: Jacques Maritain, in *The Peasant of the Garonne*, tells us that Teilhard could not discern evil. Neither, we know, could Heidegger. We may, in fact, have come finally to the point where we find the secular state peremptorily saying, as did Milton's devil: "Evil, be thou my good."

And so the admonition of Isaiah returns to us (5:20-21), and light is become darkness and darkness, light. For if there is no evil, there is no need of debates between Fr. Neuhaus and Professor Hauerwas, let alone with Prof. Singer. Indeed, as Prof. Alschuler unapprovingly quotes Holmes as saying, moral judgments are "more or less arbitrary." There is no truth, so there are no lies. There is no sacred, so there is no profane. There is, after all, no purpose, so the idea of "life unworthy of life" is not an unspeakable obscenity. Ultimately, you see, there is no ultimate. But a voice cries in the wilderness.

"The root of modern totalitarianism," Pope John Paul II has written, "is to be found in the denial of the transcendent dignity of the human person who, as the visible image of the invisible God, is therefore by his very nature the subject of rights which no one may violate." When they tell you that you have no soul, debate them; when they tell you that others have no purpose, deny them; when they come to take you to the concentration camps, defeat them. And, in doing those things, as we resist the truth-vandals (Fernandez-Armesto's term) and the terrorists and we ponder and pray (as we must) about Romans 3:8, I remember my musician in Vermont, and I remember that I must "do my best always to have a clear conscience toward God and all people" (Acts 24:16). And I think, to have that clear conscience, we must resist Singer with words and terrorists with tanks.

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Refuge

You who seek serenity in the wide
tempestuous sea of the world, cease
and abandon all hope of ever finding peace,
except in Jesus Christ, God Crucified.
If wealth absorbs your thoughts and preoccupies
your nights, God is the greatest treasure of all;
And if you're looking for beauty, always recall
that God alone is the Beauty that satisfies.
If you seek delights to set your heart on fire,
remember that God's the sweetest of all, Who rewards
His followers with victory at last;
If honor and glory are what you most desire,
no greater honor or glory has ever surpassed
humbly serving the highest Lord of Lords.

Luís de Camões (1524/25-1580)
Translated from the Portuguese by William Baer

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This Time

Standing at Attention

Alicia Mosier

It seems we haven't heard the voices of soldiers for a very long time. Not these voices, anyway: matter-of-fact, a little reserved, sometimes quiet, sometimes triumphant, from a twenty-year-old private on his first combat mission, from a major who has served around the world. They're the voices of men who have just come back from battle. This spring, they could be heard on every evening's news, along with shots of soldiers blasting missiles at enemies in the mountains, soldiers cheering the President, soldiers walking through a drab brown world (it seems to be war's only color) and talking about what happened in the fighting.

Some of us know these voices only from the movies—John Wayne in *The Longest Day*, Tom Hanks in *Saving Private Ryan*, speaking in their laconic way about taking fire, going over the ridge in the mud and the rain, remembering their wives back home. Or maybe we have heard them in the stories of relatives who served decades ago. My grandfather, who was in the Navy during World War II, used to say a few words now and then about his time on a ship in the Pacific. I have the little Bible he carried with him, with its inscription from his mother and father, its pasted-in photograph of my grandmother standing by the mailbox, and "The Star-Spangled Banner" on the page after the Lord's Prayer. He never said much about those days, even when I pressed for more; what he did say had the same soft-spoken tone you can hear in the voices of the troops in Afghanistan.

Of course, the troops mostly give reporters the same line, casual and confident: "I'm just here to do my job." That's what they say because they have hard, dangerous things to do and don't want to give away the game, and because they want to give the folks back home a good impression of the force that is defending them. If you've ever talked to soldiers, though, as I've lately had the privilege to, you know that the line is not only a line. They're humble about what they do, but they're proud of it, too. In the midst of boredom, fear, adrenaline, and exhaustion, "the job" is what holds it all together; it's the mission, the training, the code, the men. There's no need to talk it up.

In the 1980s and '90s, when I grew up, actual soldiers—actual war—seemed very far away. In fact, I never thought too much about the military at all. Defense spending? Sure, that's a good idea. Precision-guided weapons? Terrific. Respect for those who serve? Of course. But for many in my generation, that was the extent of our concern. World War II was an occasion for nostalgia. The Cold War was over. Vietnam, if not banished from memory, was conspicuously absent from public discussion. (Its veterans were all but invisible.) America was at peace. In a 2000 Gallup poll, only 4 percent of Americans mentioned international issues or foreign policy when asked what was the most important problem facing the country. With long-distance "surgical strike" capabilities, no immediate threats to our national interest, and, very importantly, no draft, we had the luxury of giving the military very little attention.

It was, in several respects, a false luxury. One reason it has been so long since we heard these voices is that it has been so long since the nation has had a clear, sustained mission overseas. To live in peacetime is a blessing, to be sure. But while we were going about our peacetime business in the Bush I and Clinton Administrations, American soldiers were everywhere. There were thirty-seven distinct deployments during that time—three times as many as there were from 1945 to 1989. After the quick-and-easy Gulf War, there were "interventions" in Bosnia, Somalia, Haiti, Sudan, Kosovo, places in which it was often unclear just what our mission was. Troops were sent in, troops were pulled out, and—except when there were casualties—most Americans were hardly affected.

We didn't pay attention because, especially in the Clinton years, the implication of those half-hearted missions was that nothing was happening that really merited our attention. In some cases, many suspected that the real purpose of the mission was not to take out dangerous entities but to distract our attention from unsavory goings-on in the Oval Office. Our indifference to the military was part and parcel of a foreign policy that used the military less than wisely (and that, not incidentally, "right-sized" the armed forces down to bare-bones levels after Desert Storm). Why pay too much heed to something to which the government seemed to give so little thought?

Now these soldiers, the best trained and best equipped in the world, have been called to do their job in a grave and urgent mission, by a President who seems to have some backbone, and Americans cannot but take notice. We have seen a lot of heroes in the past eight months—rescuers, leaders, survivors—and we've been riding a pop culture wave of tributes to military service in movies like *Black Hawk Down* and *We Were*

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Soldiers, which happened to come out just at the moment they were needed. Now, after suffering what we've suffered and rallying to war, we're remembering what it is that soldiers do, who they are and what they mean.

Morale was reported to be very high in the tough battles in the Shah-i-Kot Valley back in March, even after eight U.S. soldiers were killed in action. Some of the troops, returning from Operation Anaconda, spoke to reporters in no uncertain terms about the thrill of defeating the enemy. Apparently, this made a few people uneasy. In a March 11 letter to the *New York Times*, a woman from Decatur, Georgia, wrote: "I am saddened to read that the troops returning from the most recent fighting in Afghanistan were 'jubilant.' . . . It is incendiary to gloat over our victories. Let us recognize the gravity of war with sobered reflection."

It's a lovely thought, but I don't imagine too many Americans begrudged our troops their jubilation. It meant, first of all, that they were still alive (no small potatoes), and also that they knew they'd accomplished their mission—namely, to render hundreds of al-Qaeda and Taliban fighters incapable of endangering Americans at home or abroad ever again. To tsk-tsk them for their exhilaration and their pride in a job well done—a job, one might add, that involved putting their lives on the line in defense of ours—is the height of arrogance.

There is always the temptation to romanticize those who fight, to cover over war's brutality (and the brutal things it can do to soldiers) with a reassuring veneer of Heroic Service. The sentiment of the woman from Decatur is another sort of flight from reality. Of course, we who do not fight need some distance from the on-the-ground facts of war; we find it difficult to face, which is why, at least for most of us, we're not in uniform ourselves.

But it's not a bad thing to lose one's starry-eyed notions of what it means to be a soldier, or one's obliviousness to what they do, or one's presumption that they ought to behave like sensitive new-age men when they're out on the battlefield. Watching young Americans risking their lives on the evening news reminds us that, whether we like it or not, we *need* these people who are trained to do battle—that the world in which we live is a stark and perilous one; that our enemies are real and their conquest a good; and that some of our fellow citizens have volunteered to take them on. These, it seems to me, are the proper objects of our sobered reflection.

Some say that, in wartime, things become very simple: good guys and bad guys, heroes and cowards, victory and defeat. Of course, war is not simple at all: there are moral ambiguities, hairsbreadth choices, ever-changing strategies and situations, the unutterable realities of violence and death. But what's drawing so many people to the voices of these soldiers—and to the recent films that have done such justice to military life—is, I think, a certain sort of purity they can hear there, a certain cast of mind they may not have appreciated before in those who fight, at least not by way of the evening news.

It is a paradox of military service that the training that prepares people to fight and kill is at its core a training in the virtues. The code they swear to uphold uses words like loyalty, duty, respect, service, honor, integrity, courage; one need not be a romantic to see that they know the meaning of those words. Those are the principles that can keep a man alive in the middle of enemy fire, principles in which he is trained every day. Soldiers really do know fear and shame and sacrifice; they really do learn to master their will in the face of great danger, to keep calm in the midst of uncertainty, to act in an instant, knowing that their brothers' lives are on the line. It is a life in which not only physical and mental strength but virtue too is taken to its limits, in which you know exactly who you are.

The words of the code, said General Douglas MacArthur in a 1962 address to cadets at the U.S. Military Academy, "make you strong enough to know when you are weak, and brave enough to face yourself when you are afraid." Those who live this life don't talk about it much. There's nothing about it that Bobo proprieties can touch. There's nothing sentimental, but there is something noble. We have not gained by forgetting it.

That this war must be fought is not cause for rejoicing. As MacArthur said, "a soldier above all other people prays for peace." But Charles Krauthammer is right to call this "a war of necessity," in which defeat is not an option. The luxury of forgetting about the military, which we have enjoyed for twenty years, encouraged us to imagine that the world was different than it is, that courage and duty and honor didn't have much purchase on us, that there wasn't much left for which to risk our lives. Watching our troops in action now—hearing them jubilant when victorious and stern when in danger, seeing them go down into caves and back for their brothers—clears the mind of many fictions. Since this war began, we have had occasion to ask just what we are defending, who we are, why it is we fight. Those who do the fighting are themselves an answer to those questions. FT

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Opinion

Better Off Dead?

Jay Webber

In my favorite movie, George Bailey falls under the terrible illusion that everyone around him would be better off if he had never even been born. To show him how tragically misguided he is, his guardian angel Clarence shows him what the world would be like without him, and—I don't think I'm ruining the ending for anyone—George realizes that his really has been a wonderful life.

In 2002, a plaintiff's attorney might get to George quicker than an angel. That's what I gather, anyway, from a recent edition of a local legal newspaper. In it there is an advertisement by a law firm trumpeting the multimillion-dollar settlements it has won for people willing to claim they wish that they, or their children, had never been born. Those lawyers are getting rich—and they want you to get rich too—on two of America's most outrageous legal absurdities, "wrongful birth" and "wrongful life" claims.

Essentially, wrongful birth and wrongful life claims are variations on the standard medical malpractice claim: plaintiffs seek damages from doctors and hospitals for negligent acts committed by medical professionals. They involve a macabre twist of logic, however, that sets them apart. Wrongful birth and life plaintiffs must claim that if only the physician (or ultrasound technician, or geneticist) had given the parents of an unborn child the proper notice about their child's birth defects, the parents would have had an abortion in order to avoid the anguish and expense the child has caused since his birth. In other words, but for the negligence of the doctor the child would never have been born, and because the child has been born, the parents and the child are worse off emotionally and financially. Wrongful birth suits are brought by the parents of disabled children to claim damages for themselves; wrongful life suits are brought by parents on behalf of their handicapped children for the "damages" the child has suffered by being brought into the world.

It is important to note that in neither cause of action does a plaintiff claim that the medical professional actually caused the child's birth defects. The defects occur either naturally or by some other cause. The professional is negligent only insofar as he misreads an ultrasound or miscommunicates the chances of a genetic defect due to disease or genetic predisposition. The birth defects that can give rise to such suits range from the fatal (such as anencephaly—the brain growing outside of the skull) to the manageable (such as deafness, blindness, Down's syndrome, and hemophilia).

Wrongful birth and life suits have been in the news recently for the minor uproar they have caused in France. The French high court recognized wrongful birth and wrongful life as causes of action for the first time in November 2001. (See FT, Public Square, January 2002.) In January 2002, the French legislature passed a bill overturning that decision with respect to wrongful life suits. As the issue turns to the French Senate, French pro-lifers continue to lobby for the outlaw of wrongful birth suits as well.

Sadly, such lawsuits do not make headlines in America anymore, because in many states they have been with us for years. Not long after the *Roe v. Wade* decision in 1973, state courts began recognizing wrongful birth and life causes of action. The Supreme Court of my home state of New Jersey led the way.

Before *Roe*, the New Jersey Supreme Court practically scoffed at the notion of either type of lawsuit. In 1967, it rejected a claim with language pro-life lawyers could find only in their dreams today:

> The right to life is inalienable in our society. A court cannot say what defects should prevent an embryo from being allowed life such that denial of the opportunity to terminate the existence of a defective child in embryo can support a cause of action. . . . A child need not be perfect to have a worthwhile life. . . . The sanctity of the single human life is the decisive factor in this suit in tort. Eugenic considerations are not controlling. We are not talking here about the breeding of prize cattle. It may have been easier for the mother and less expensive for the father to have terminated the life of their child while he was an embryo, but these alleged detriments cannot stand against the preciousness of the single human life to support a remedy in tort.

The *Roe* opinion completely reshaped legal views of the unborn, however, and soon thereafter the New Jersey Supremes were singing a different tune. In 1979, that court became the first to recognize the tort of wrongful birth. In light of *Roe*, the Court said that eugenic considerations in fact did control decisions regarding the birth of a child.

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> Public policy now supports, rather than militates against, the proposition that [the plaintiff] not be impermissibly denied a meaningful opportunity to make that decision [to abort]. . . . [We will not] immunize from liability those in the medical field providing inadequate guidance to persons who would choose to exercise their constitutional right to abort fetuses which, if born, would suffer from genetic defects.

In 1984, the same court recognized wrongful life suits as well. At last count, twenty-seven states recognize the tort of wrongful birth, while three recognize wrongful life causes of action.

A first-year law student can count the ways in which these suits violate the tenets of traditional tort law, let alone common sense. For example, in traditional tort law, in order for one to be liable for the injuries of another, one's actions must actually *cause* the injuries. But in wrongful birth and life suits, the defendants have not caused any harm to the unborn child. The plaintiffs argue that the child's life itself is an injury, nonexistence being preferable to the child's challenged existence.

Such claims fly in the face of another basic element of tort law: a plaintiff must be able to claim damages for the injury incurred. In tort, courts are charged with making the plaintiff whole, or putting the plaintiff in the same position he would have been in had the injury not occurred. But how can a court compare the value of a life with a handicap to the alternative—never having lived at all? And which handicaps make life not worth living? If blindness and deafness make life unbearable, does blindness in one eye, or deafness in one ear? Does being born with just plain bad eyesight or hearing entitle one to an award? How serious must one's mental retardation be to qualify for compensation? Must it be "severe," or can a person of mere lower-than-average intelligence recover damages?

Those are dismal questions indeed. To avoid them, our only position must be that no life with any of those naturally occurring maladies should count as an "injury." Bishop Fulton J. Sheen had it right: life—every life—is worth living.

There is also the small point of a plaintiff's obligation under the law to mitigate his damages. In other words, once an injury occurs, the injured must take all reasonable steps to prevent the injury from getting any worse. If indeed a handicapped child is a net drain such that her parents are due compensation for her very existence, then why not require them to give the child away? Or, if the child is generally a net drain on society, why not kill her? Chilling and perverse as that "logic" might be, can anyone predict with confidence that that will not be an option in, say, Oregon in the next twenty years?

Not that even casual court watchers could have been surprised by the recognition of these suits. As should be obvious by now from various contexts, our courts rarely allow high metaphysical, logical, or even legal hurdles to impede them from the "progress" they seek to make. In New Jersey, the Supreme Court simply emoted its way over and around the traditional obstacles to recognizing wrongful birth and life claims. "Law is more than an exercise in logic," it wrote, "and logical analysis, although essential to a system of ordered justice, should not become an instrument of injustice." The Court saw it as its job "to respond to the call of the living for help in bearing the burden of their affliction." Hundreds of years of legal precedent to the contrary were out the window.

Helping the disabled bear the burden of their affliction is a praiseworthy goal, but it's also something our elected officials do fairly well. At nearly every level of government, legislative bodies have passed laws that make clear that the disabled among us are to be loved, respected, and assisted. Federal, state, and local programs provide financial, medical, educational, and vocational assistance to children and adults with disabilities as well as their families. Discrimination on the basis of handicaps is outlawed in the workplace and the housing market, and accommodations for the disabled are required of public and private employers and transportation providers. Legislators scramble for the credit whenever they win victories for the physically or mentally disabled, and usually for good reason. Those programs represent the most basic threads of our social safety net and should remain a high priority.

The advantages of programs instituted by elected representatives are many. Chief among them are that such statutes are generally applicable and provide immediate assistance to families in crisis. In contrast, trying to help families bear the burden of their children's disability through litigation is a prolonged, piecemeal approach that offers potentially rich monetary rewards only to those few parents who are aggressive enough to file suit and who are fortunate enough to win compensation. I see no good reason for that: wrongful birth and life plaintiffs have no greater claim to assistance than the rest of the families that must rear disabled children.

In stark contrast to our stated legislative policy of protecting and cherishing the disabled, wrongful birth and life suits marginalize and stigmatize them. Courts have concluded that it is permissible and right to proclaim that, as a matter of law, some handicapped individuals would be better off dead. Worse, they put parents in the position of testifying to that effect in open court about their own children, who someday will doubtless wonder what could have driven their parents to make such cruel statements. The *Roe* logic has sunk us that much further

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into a culture of death. Rank disregard for the unborn has devolved into open contempt for the most vulnerable and innocent of the born.

The harm the courts do in this area extends beyond the creation of intangible stigma or theoretical harms. Wrongful birth and life suits create negative incentives that can affect the behavior of medical professionals. The lawsuits encourage more, and more thorough, prenatal genetic testing. If an ultrasound or other genetic test indicates that there might be the slightest problem with an unborn child, it is in the medical professional's interest to point out the defect, or potential defect, and advocate abortion as a course of "treatment" to the parents. From the doctor's perspective, why risk a lawsuit over a child who might be born with a defect? In a close case, better to suggest an abortion and reduce one's potential liability.

Further, an increased emphasis on genetic screening places an increased social pressure to abort on parents of the disabled unborn. If they do not abort, the parents risk being blamed by neighbors for subjecting their child to a malady that was so "avoidable." For proof of such pressure, see the recent and rapid decline in the birth rate of Down's Syndrome children during the last decade. As the human genome continues to be mapped and the reality of human cloning sinks in, these lawsuits represent a less visible, but still very real, eugenic influence on society.

Those incentives are obviously abhorrent to the usual defenders of life in the womb, whose religious backgrounds help them recognize in each human being an imperfect but loved member of God's family. They should also be unwelcomed by at least some on the opposite end of the political and ideological spectrum. Some feminist scholars, for example, have pointed out that increased prenatal screening may yield information that an uncommitted biological father could use as a pretext to abandon child and mother.

No one should denigrate the pain and anger that parents feel when they learn that their child is disabled. It is hardly unexpected for them to lash out and seek someone to blame for their anguish and their child's challenges. In twenty-first-century America, those emotions often move people to call a lawyer and sue anyone who might be blamed for their problem. They do so regardless of its real cause and even though there's often no one, at least no human being, to blame.

There's an old saying that goes, "You can't lend a hand if you're pointing a finger." The desire for parents of a disabled newborn to point a finger at the closest or most convenient person as the cause of their pain is understandable. When that happens, it's time for society to lend the parents the hand they need, whether through public support or formal or informal private assistance, rather than point a finger with them by condoning wrongful birth and life suits. Only by doing that can we affirm the child's life, salve the parents' wounds, and recognize the obligations of our common imperfection. Recommitting ourselves to solidarity in those ways reclaims a small part of our culture for the culture of life.

The good news is that wrongful birth and life suits are fairly easy to ban legislatively in the states. It's not hard to imagine a powerful coalition consisting of advocacy groups for the disabled, pro-lifers, medical professionals, and tort reformers pushing through the simple and straightforward laws that outlaw these causes of action. Eight states have already banned one or both; Michigan barred both just last year. One hopes that more legislatures will follow their lead, because the world could use fewer plaintiffs' attorneys and more guardian angels.

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"Instinctive Repugnance"

David Novak

The Jewish-Christian dialogue of recent decades is a new thing that stands in sharp contrast to the terribly complicated relationship between Jews and Christians over the past two thousand years. It is not at all surprising that there are both Christians and Jews who are afraid of the dialogue. The relationship between Jews and Christians is inherently ambivalent. Jewish-Christian dialogue at its best is energized by the complex dialectic involved in that ambivalence. There are both Jews and Christians, however, who have no patience with ambivalence and dialectic. For them, the relationship must be either fully positive or fully negative. They refuse to live with what some French philosophers like to call *la différance.*

A fully positive relationship between Christians and Jews is one that would elide all differences. Such a relationship can only be proposed coherently by Christians who see Jews, quite simply, as objects of their proselytizing project. In this view, Judaism is nothing more than proto-Christianity. It follows that Judaism and the Jews should be positively included in the Church, and that inclusion should be total. Obviously, such an approach cannot be proposed by a Jew, since no one can argue

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that Christianity is proto-Judaism, or that it could be positively included in the Jewish people. (Admittedly, there are "messianic Jews" who think there can be a Christian branch of Judaism. But they have been able to convince only a few gentile Christians and no non-Christian Jews that this is possible, let alone desirable.) While for almost all, if not all, Christians evangelization is a necessary part of being Christian, those Christians involved in the dialogue clearly recognize that the dialogue itself is not an instrument of evangelization. It is noteworthy that churches involved in the dialogue—most prominently the Catholic Church—no longer engage in missionary activities that directly target Jews. At the deepest theological level, this has resulted in the denial of supersessionism, the idea that God has rejected the Jewish people and has replaced them with the Church. Those communities that view Judaism as nothing more than an object of Christian inclusion cannot participate in the dialogue in good faith, and therefore do not.

A fully negative relationship between Christians and Jews, on the other hand, is one that would remove the very existence of the other community. Most horribly, this was the approach of those Christians who saw the Nazi program of the elimination of the Jews (even before the mass murder perpetrated by the Final Solution) as justified by Christianity itself. There have also been Jews—one thinks of the late Professor Eliezer Berkovits—who have viewed Christianity as the true cause of the Nazi policy of Jewish elimination and who have therefore argued that the Jews—and indeed the entire world—would be better off without Christianity. Happily, even Christian and Jewish opponents of the dialogue usually recoil from such a drastic negation of the other, although they may have difficulty in coming up with a strong argument against it.

The document *Dabru Emet* ("Speak the Truth"): *A Jewish Statement on Christians and Christianity*, written by four Jewish scholars long active in the dialogue (Tikva Frymer-Kensky, Peter Ochs, Michael Signer, and this writer), was issued in September 2000 (see FT, November 2000). This document emphasizes what Jews and Christians have in common, while explicitly asserting what does and what should keep the two communities separate and distinct. In no way does the document avoid the aforementioned ambivalence and dialectic. It has received much publicity and has been translated into at least six other languages. It has been very favorably received in many Christian quarters, and it certainly has not been interpreted as any kind of Jewish capitulation to Christianity.

It is not too much to say that *Dabru Emet* provides the first normative text for Jews dealing with the new and better chapter in the relationship between our communities dating from the 1965 statement, *Nostra Aetate*, of the Second Vatican Council. As there is still Christian opposition to the Christian document of 1965, so there is now Jewish opposition to *Dabru Emet*. In fact, those of us involved in the statement expected more opposition than has surfaced to date, for we know full well how controversial is the very question of Christianity among Jews. We are surprised, however, by the source of the most explicit public attack on *Dabru Emet* to date, namely, the article "How Not to Conduct Jewish-Christian Dialogue" by Professor Jon D. Levenson, an eminent Jewish scholar who teaches at the Harvard Divinity School, appearing in the December 2001 issue of *Commentary*, a monthly magazine published by the American Jewish Committee.

It seems strange that the attack comes from Prof. Levenson, who is no stranger to the theological dialogue in which many of us have long been his colleagues. He also teaches Jewish Studies in the oldest Christian divinity school in North America. Prof. Levenson was invited (along with almost two hundred other Jewish teachers) to sign *Dabru Emet*, but was one of the few to decline, indicating that he had serious differences with the statement. One might have expected that he would either ignore the document or propose an alternative way of conducting the dialogue. Instead, he has not only rejected our version of the dialogue, but appears to reject any version of dialogue that is not essentially negative.

If Prof. Levenson taught in an officially Jewish religious school, such as a yeshiva or rabbinical seminary, his opposition to the dialogue might be understandable. Many Jewish scholars who teach in such exclusively Jewish institutions have either avoided the dialogue altogether or have opposed it on theological grounds. Many of them follow the view of the late Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik (1903-1993), who was the leading Orthodox Jewish theologian in North America and opposed Jewish-Christian theological dialogue (but with far less invective than Prof. Levenson) in the 1960s because he thought that theology is incommunicable between different faith traditions. (The authors of *Dabru Emet*, conversely, think that on many theological issues Jews and Christians speak languages similar enough to each other to be intelligible to each other.) For many, but not all, of the disciples of Rabbi Soloveitchik—one thinks of Rabbi Irving Greenberg and Rabbi David Hartman as notable exceptions—Jews can engage in theological discourse only with fellow Jews, as Christians can do so only with fellow Christians. I think this view is mistaken but can understand its rationale as being consistent with the theology of many Orthodox Jews. At the same time, one notes that some Orthodox rabbis did sign *Dabru Emet*.

Prof. Levenson begins his article with the admission that interfaith dialogue is "one of the most remarkable

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cultural developments of the past half-century." Toward the end of the article, however, he asserts, "One need hardly be an advocate of interfaith hostility to observe [that] the two communities . . . feel an instinctive repugnance toward each other." In a relationship of instinctive repugnance, how could there be anything but hostility? How could there possibly be a dialogue, "a speaking together thorough a question" (the literal meaning of the Greek *dia logos*), based on mutual repugnance? Isn't that what took place in the infamous medieval disputations, when Christians and Jews spoke *against* one another and, hence, *past* one another? Surely it is better and more accurate to say that both communities are *concerned* with each other, and that this *concern* has both positive and negative features. Even the negative aspects of that concern need not presuppose repugnance or entail hostility.

Since so much Christian concern with Judaism and Jewish concern with Christianity has been negative, *Dabru Emet* accented the positive points that the new theological dialogue has brought to light again after a very long eclipse. As Aristotle pointed out, in a state of affairs having both a negative and a positive pole, overemphasizing one pole requires re-emphasizing the other to achieve a healthy balance. If we emphasized the positive pole of the Jewish-Christian relationship more than the negative, it is because for too long we have only heard about what is negative in this relationship.

Prof. Levenson opposes the dialogue because of a presumed theological impasse between Judaism and Christianity, and he also connects it to "the history of religiously inspired contempt." Why Prof. Levenson teaches mostly Christian students in a Christian divinity school is a question he needs to answer, even if only to his Christian students and colleagues at Harvard. Moreover, why would Christian students want to study Judaism with a teacher who sees their relation to Judaism and his relation to Christianity to be one of "instinctive repugnance"? As a practicing Jew, I have studied with Christian teachers whom I respect for who they are and what they are, including their positive concern with Jews and Judaism. Why would any self-respecting Christian not expect the same of his or her Jewish teachers?

Perhaps there are Christians, however, who actually enjoy hearing from a Jew as learned as Prof. Levenson just how anti-Jewish Christianity has been, and how that anti-Judaism has translated into anti-Semitic acts against Jews. This might be a symptom of "post-Christianity," a kind of moral logic for Christians in the process of distancing themselves from Christianity. Jews have long experience with Christians who have tried to help us in putting our Judaism behind us. Do Christians now have Jews who assist them in putting their Christianity behind them? Jews who have welcomed such "help" are repugnant to many of their fellow Jews for what is seen to be their self-hate. (Indeed, the term *Selbsthass* or "self-hate" was coined to describe a certain type of Jewish assimilationist in early-twentieth-century Europe.) Perhaps we are now seeing a Christian equivalent of this self-hate, a kind of theological masochism. If so, it should be repugnant to anyone, and Prof. Levenson, practicing Jew that he is, should heed the admonition of the great rabbinic sage Hillel the Elder, who famously taught that "what is hateful to you, do not do to someone else."

Once again we are reminded that the stakes are very high in the dialogue, and that anyone who participates in it, as do Prof. Levenson and the authors of *Dabru Emet*, must take full responsibility for what they say and to whom they say it. Prof. Levenson must take responsibility for his assertion that the Jewish-Christian relationship necessarily involves mutual repugnance. If repugnance leads to hostility, it would seem to follow that Judaism must necessarily be hostile to Christians and Christianity. If so, is Prof. Levenson not telling Christians that they must necessarily be hostile to Jews and Judaism? It is hard to see how that could be good for Jews, or anyone else. The anti-Jewish hostility of times past has been overcome with full theological conviction by Christians in the dialogue. Their actions prove it. But maybe Prof. Levenson thinks these pro-Jewish Christians are "whistling in the dark," as he says his Jewish colleagues in the dialogue are doing.

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Keeping the Faith

Joseph Loconte

In a way no one anticipated, George W. Bush has shifted the national debate about the role of religion in American life. For nearly twenty-five years, conservative Christians have focused on a politics of protest. Abortion, homosexuality, pornography, de-moralized public schools—these and other issues have defined the public face of religious conservatives.

Now, thanks largely to the President's faith-based initiative, a fuller portrait of the faithful is emerging. Moved by his own experience of faith in tackling a drinking problem, Bush has sought to create more civic space for religious ministries helping the poorest of the poor. "Starting now," Bush said in announcing his agen-

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da, "the federal government is adopting a new attitude to honor and not restrict faith-based and community initiatives." The result: religious charities are regularly invited to congressional hearings, get frequent presidential visits, enjoy lots of favorable media, and are the hottest topic at conferences on religion in America.

Along the way, the tired script of church-state dogfights is being rewritten. The President is much less interested in religious conservatives as fiery prophets than as Good Samaritans; he would rather see them take over soup kitchens than storm the Supreme Court. For civic-minded Christians, the Bush approach is double-edged: it creates more opportunities for the Church to serve neighbors in need, but it also increases pressures to compromise the faith in order to join hands with government.

Those pressures have been on vivid display in the most contested part of the President's agenda, that of making government money widely available to churches and religious groups providing social services. Liberals worry about religious influence in government, while many conservatives fear the opposite. Meanwhile, partisan bickering has taken the initiative into some troubled waters. Last summer the House of Representatives passed a bill with tough religious-freedom protections for charities taking federal funds, though with puny incentives to boost private giving. A Senate bill, introduced in February and hailed as a compromise, is still being debated. It offers just the opposite of the House package: strong tax incentives to support charitable groups, but little to defend religious organizations from government meddling. The fate of the legislation is anyone's guess.

Some lessons from this debate, however, are clear. One is that the secular dogma guiding social welfare programs can and must be overturned. This is the hardest task facing the White House, yet the failure of government programs to face the moral and spiritual dimensions of poverty, drug use, and family disintegration can no longer be ignored. The President sent the right message when he appointed John DiIulio, a leading academic researcher into the potency of church-based ministries, to head his Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives. When doubters maligned the initiative as "untested" and "risky," DiIulio delivered the perfect rebuttal: "We already know more of a scientific nature about the extent and efficacy of these programs than the architects of the Great Society ever did when they launched their big-government initiatives in the 1960s."

Defenders of the welfare state resist this argument with every breath. House Democrats fought intensely last year over how—and whether—to allow voluntary religious activity in government-funded programs. One got the sense that, apart from any First Amendment concerns, critics couldn't fathom how exposure to religious ideas or practices might help those in need. Social science researchers, who have done so much to shape public policy, seem equally baffled. A recent evaluation of more than four hundred studies of juvenile delinquency found that barely 10 percent even took religion into account. The reason, explains Harvard professor Theda Skopcol, is that the academic literature on social welfare policy is "so dominated by leftist secularists that it has written out of the record" the work of religious organizations.

The result is a human-services regime that is indifferent to matters of the heart. This judgment was driven home, for example, in interviews I conducted outside needle-exchange programs in New York City. The idea of such programs is to give clean needles to intravenous drug users to keep them from sharing syringes and getting AIDS. One patron, who gave his name as Walter, already had the disease. He was selling his free needles for drug money. Asked if he could imagine a life without heroin, he winced: "I'm past that. The only good thing I do is get high."

As applied to social services, this is the mischief of materialism: it lacks hope that people, with God's help, can change. No wonder, then, that the recipients of these programs stop hoping as well.

Yet common sense, not to mention the history of the Church's ministry to the poor, tells us that treating people with God-given dignity can make a decisive difference. Indeed, good research increasingly is making the case for faith commitment. Dozens of empirically grounded studies, for example, show that where religious institutions thrive, predatory street crime is less severe. Using data from the National Youth Survey, researchers Byron Johnson at the University of Pennsylvania and David Larson at Duke University Medical School found that, controlling for other variables, religious belief has a "consistent direct effect" on reducing delinquency. Though more research is needed, there is reason to expect similar conclusions about faith-based drug treatment, pregnancy prevention, and other programs. A faith-friendly White House can help set the record straight.

A second lesson from the fight over the President's initiative is that civil liberty and religious liberty must be defended together. The Senate bill now being considered requires "equal treatment" for all social service providers seeking government support. That's a milestone for government social policy. Nevertheless, the bill omits key religious liberty protections passed in the 1996 Welfare Reform law and approved by the House last year. The provisions, called "charitable choice," allow organizations receiving public funds to

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keep control over the "practice and expression" of their religious beliefs. The law also permits charities to use religion as a criterion for employment.

It was the latter provision that nearly derailed the legislation and forced the Senate compromise bill. Liberals, gay activists, and others assaulted the hiring protection as "federally funded discrimination" and claimed it would "turn back the clock" on civil rights. The Salvation Army even came under fire for allegedly offering the White House a quid pro quo: support of the Bush plan for federal exemptions from antidiscrimination laws that clash with Army rules against hiring homosexuals. One of the nation's most respected charities was vilified as a haven of intolerance.

The remarkable thing is that such open assaults on an independent civil society are now routine. No private organization—secular or religious—can preserve its freedom if it loses control over its fundamental mission. An organization's staff, of course, carries out that mission by embodying its deepest beliefs and values. That's as true for Planned Parenthood as it is for Prison Fellowship. Carl Esbeck, a Department of Justice official who helped draft charitable choice, put it aptly in testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee: "To bar a religious organization from hiring on a religious basis is to assail the very animating cause for which the organization was formed in the first place."

Nevertheless, even so-called New Democrats such as Senator Joseph Lieberman are citing civil rights legislation of the 1960s to complain about faith-based groups that discriminate in employment for religious reasons. Never mind that the 1964 Civil Rights Act specifically exempts religious bodies from antidiscrimination laws on the employment question. Never mind that the Supreme Court has upheld this right for private and religious institutions as a First Amendment protection. And never mind that there's something deeply offensive about comparing the inner life of America's churches and synagogues to the institutionalized racism of the Deep South, circa 1950.

The White House has adopted a strategy of silence on the question. This may have salvaged the legislative effort for now, but at what cost? The Boy Scouts—who meet in living rooms and take no government money—barely survived a recent Supreme Court challenge to their prohibition against gay Scoutmasters. The autonomy of religious institutions is no longer taken for granted, in part because of a failure to see the connection between religious and political liberty.

A final lesson of this debate is that the job of restoring religious belief as an engine of social renewal belongs primarily to forces outside Washington. True, the federal government funds and regulates most of the nation's social service programs, making systemic reform vital. But—apart from that Sisyphean task—there's a lot being done at the state and local level to legitimize and expand the redemptive work of the Church.

This may prove to be the greatest accomplishment of the Bush initiative: restoring civic trust between church and state. Over the last eighteen months, at least fourteen states have established offices to broker agreements between social service agencies and congregations. Bush's home state of Texas has moved the fastest, forging hundreds of partnerships with religious groups to help with everything from welfare-to-work programs to criminal rehabilitation. More than one hundred mayors have announced plans to launch similar offices in their own cities. In Philadelphia, for example, the former mayor personally appealed to religious leaders to create one of the nation's most ambitious mentoring programs for at-risk children. In less than six months, churches mobilized more than five hundred new mentors, doubling the existing Big Brother/Big Sister program. Much of this activity would have been unthinkable not long ago.

In an earlier era, however, it was all many citizens could think about; at its best, the Bush initiative recalls the philanthropic zeal of nineteenth-century moral reformers. Societies to overcome drunkenness and homelessness, the formation of common schools, campaigns against the forcible removal of native Americans, antislavery societies—nearly all were driven by private citizens who took seriously their Christian obligations to promote justice. Ministers such as Lyman Beecher made sure that social reform was one of the fruits of religious revivalism. Beecher argued that voluntary associations—free, vibrant, independent of government—should be "prepared to act upon every emergency, and repel every encroachment upon the liberties and morals of the state."

Here is a vision for Christian civic engagement that does not expect the Church to surrender her prophetic role in order to serve the common good. To borrow from the apostle Paul, a faith-based initiative that takes the Church's mind off things above won't do much good for the things below. "If you read history," wrote C. S. Lewis, "you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next." If the Church is no longer free to be the Church, the President's hope of mobilizing the "armies of compassion" will dissolve. It remains to be seen whether he and other leaders in government will use the tools of government—law, public policy, and the bully pulpit—to preserve their freedom and multiply their works of mercy and grace.

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God's Justice and Ours

Antonin Scalia

Before proceeding to discuss the morality of capital punishment, I want to make clear that my views on the subject have nothing to do with how I vote in capital cases that come before the Supreme Court. That statement would not be true if I subscribed to the conventional fallacy that the Constitution is a "living document"—that is, a text that means from age to age whatever the society (or perhaps the Court) thinks it ought to mean.

In recent years, that philosophy has been particularly well enshrined in our Eighth Amendment jurisprudence, our case law dealing with the prohibition of "cruel and unusual punishments." Several of our opinions have said that what falls within this prohibition is not static, but changes from generation to generation, to comport with "the evolving standards of decency that mark the progress of a maturing society." Applying that principle, the Court came close, in 1972, to abolishing the death penalty entirely. It ultimately did not do so, but it has imposed, under color of the Constitution, procedural and substantive limitations that did not exist when the Eighth Amendment was adopted—and some of which had not even been adopted by a majority of the states at the time they were judicially decreed. For example, the Court has prohibited the death penalty for all crimes except murder, and indeed even for what might be called run-of-the-mill murders, as opposed to those that are somehow characterized by a high degree of brutality or depravity. It has prohibited the mandatory imposition of the death penalty for any crime, insisting that in all cases the jury be permitted to consider all mitigating factors and to impose, if it wishes, a lesser sentence. And it has imposed an age limit at the time of the offense (it is currently seventeen) that is well above what existed at common law.

If I subscribed to the proposition that I am authorized (indeed, I suppose compelled) to intuit and impose our "maturing" society's "evolving standards of decency," this essay would be a preview of my next vote in a death penalty case. As it is, however, the Constitution that I interpret and apply is not living but dead—or, as I prefer to put it, enduring. It means today not what current society (much less the Court) thinks it ought to mean, but what it meant when it was adopted. For me, therefore, the constitutionality of the death penalty is not a difficult, soul-wrenching question. It was clearly permitted when the Eighth Amendment was adopted (not merely for murder, by the way, but for all felonies—including, for example, horse-thieving, as anyone can verify by watching a western movie). And so it is clearly permitted today. There is plenty of room within this system for "evolving standards of decency," but the instrument of evolution (or, if you are more tolerant of the Court's approach, the herald that evolution has occurred) is not the nine lawyers who sit on the Supreme Court of the United States, but the Congress of the United States and the legislatures of the fifty states, who may, within their own jurisdictions, restrict or abolish the death penalty as they wish.

But while my views on the morality of the death penalty have nothing to do with how I vote as a judge, they have a lot to do with whether I can or should be a judge at all. To put the point in the blunt terms employed by Justice Harold Blackmun towards the end of his career on the bench, when he announced that he would henceforth vote (as Justices William Brennan and Thurgood Marshall had previously done) to overturn all death sentences, when I sit on a Court that reviews and affirms capital convictions, I am part of "the machinery

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of death." My vote, when joined with at least four others, is, in most cases, the last step that permits an execution to proceed. I could not take part in that process if I believed what was being done to be immoral.

Capital cases are much different from the other life-and-death issues that my Court sometimes faces: abortion, for example, or legalized suicide. There it is not the state (of which I am in a sense the last instrument) that is decreeing death, but rather private individuals whom the state has decided not to restrain. One may argue (as many do) that the society has a moral obligation to restrain. That moral obligation may weigh heavily upon the voter, and upon the legislator who enacts the laws; but a judge, I think, bears no moral guilt for the laws society has failed to enact. Thus, my difficulty with *Roe v. Wade* is a legal rather than a moral one: I do not believe (and, for two hundred years, no one believed) that the Constitution contains a right to abortion. And if a state were to permit abortion on demand, I would—and could in good conscience—vote against an attempt to invalidate that law for the same reason that I vote against the invalidation of laws that forbid abortion on demand: because the Constitution gives the federal government (and hence me) no power over the matter.

With the death penalty, on the other hand, I am part of the criminal-law machinery that imposes death—which extends from the indictment, to the jury conviction, to rejection of the last appeal. I am aware of the ethical principle that one can give "material cooperation" to the immoral act of another when the evil that would attend failure to cooperate is even greater (for example, helping a burglar tie up a householder where the alternative is that the burglar would kill the householder). I doubt whether that doctrine is even applicable to the trial judges and jurors who must themselves determine that the death sentence will be imposed. It seems to me these individuals are not merely engaged in "material cooperation" with someone else's action, but are themselves decreeing death on behalf of the state.

The same is true of appellate judges in those states where they are charged with "reweighing" the mitigating and aggravating factors and determining de novo whether the death penalty should be imposed: they are themselves decreeing death. Where (as is the case in the federal system) the appellate judge merely determines that the sentence pronounced by the trial court is in accordance with law, perhaps the principle of material cooperation could be applied. But as I have said, that principle demands that the good deriving from the cooperation exceed the evil which is assisted. I find it hard to see how any appellate judge could find this condition to be met, unless he believes retaining his seat on the bench (rather than resigning) is somehow essential to preservation of the society—which is of course absurd. (As Charles de Gaulle is reputed to have remarked when his aides told him he could not resign as President of France because he was the indispensable man: "*Mon ami*, the cemeteries are full of indispensable men.")

I pause here to emphasize the point that in my view the choice for the judge who believes the death penalty to be immoral is resignation, rather than simply ignoring duly enacted, constitutional laws and sabotaging death penalty cases. He has, after all, taken an oath to apply the laws and has been given no power to supplant them with rules of his own. Of course if he feels strongly enough he can go beyond mere resignation and lead a political campaign to abolish the death penalty—and if that fails, lead a revolution. But rewrite the laws he cannot do. This dilemma, of course, need not be confronted by a proponent of the "living Constitution," who believes that it means what it ought to mean. If the death penalty is (in his view) immoral, then it is (hey, presto!) automatically unconstitutional, and he can continue to sit while nullifying a sanction that has been imposed, with no suggestion of its unconstitutionality, since the beginning of the Republic. (You can see why the "living Constitution" has such attraction for us judges.)

It is a matter of great consequence to me, therefore, whether the death penalty is morally acceptable. As a Roman Catholic—and being unable to jump out of my skin—I cannot discuss that issue without reference to Christian tradition and the Church's Magisterium.

The death penalty is undoubtedly wrong unless one accords to the state a scope of moral action that goes beyond what is permitted to the individual. In my view, the major impetus behind modern aversion to the death penalty is the equation of private morality with governmental morality. This is a predictable (though I believe erroneous and regrettable) reaction to modern, democratic self-government.

Few doubted the morality of the death penalty in the age that believed in the divine right of kings. Or even in earlier times. St. Paul had this to say (I am quoting, as you might expect, the King James version):

> Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

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> for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. (Romans 13:1-5)

This is not the Old Testament, I emphasize, but St. Paul. One can understand his words as referring only to lawfully constituted authority, or even only to lawfully constituted authority that rules justly. But the *core* of his message is that government—however you want to limit that concept—derives its moral authority from God. It is the "minister of God" with powers to "revenge," to "execute wrath," including even wrath by the sword (which is unmistakably a reference to the death penalty). Paul of course did not believe that the *individual* possessed any such powers. Only a few lines before this passage, he wrote, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." And in this world the Lord repaid—did justice—through His minister, the state.

These passages from Romans represent the consensus of Western thought until very recent times. Not just of Christian or religious thought, but of secular thought regarding the powers of the state. That consensus has been upset, I think, by the emergence of democracy. It is easy to see the hand of the Almighty behind rulers whose forebears, in the dim mists of history, were supposedly anointed by God, or who at least obtained their thrones in awful and unpredictable battles whose outcome was determined by the Lord of Hosts, that is, the Lord of Armies. It is much more difficult to see the hand of God—or any higher moral authority—behind the fools and rogues (as the losers would have it) whom we ourselves elect to do our own will. How can their power to avenge—to vindicate the "public order"—be any greater than our own?

So it is no accident, I think, that the modern view that the death penalty is immoral is centered in the West. That has little to do with the fact that the West has a Christian tradition, and everything to do with the fact that the West is the home of democracy. Indeed, it seems to me that the more Christian a country is the *less* likely it is to regard the death penalty as immoral. Abolition has taken its firmest hold in post-Christian Europe, and has least support in the church-going United States. I attribute that to the fact that, for the believing Christian, death is no big deal. Intentionally killing an innocent person is a big deal: it is a grave sin, which causes one to lose his soul. But losing this life, in exchange for the next? The Christian attitude is reflected in the words Robert Bolt's play has Thomas More saying to the headsman: "Friend, be not afraid of your office. You send me to God." And when Cranmer asks whether he is sure of that, More replies, "He will not refuse one who is so blithe to go to Him." For the nonbeliever, on the other hand, to deprive a man of his life is to end his existence. What a horrible act!

Besides being *less* likely to regard death as an utterly cataclysmic punishment, the Christian is also *more* likely to regard punishment in general as deserved. The doctrine of free will—the ability of man to resist temptations to evil, which God will not permit beyond man's capacity to resist—is central to the Christian doctrine of salvation and damnation, heaven and hell. The post-Freudian secularist, on the other hand, is more inclined to think that people are what their history and circumstances have made them, and there is little sense in assigning blame.

Of course those who deny the authority of a government to exact vengeance are not entirely logical. Many crimes—for example, domestic murder in the heat of passion—are neither deterred by punishment meted out to others nor likely to be committed a second time by the same offender. Yet opponents of capital punishment do not object to sending such an offender to prison, perhaps for life. Because he *deserves* punishment. Because it is *just*.

The mistaken tendency to believe that a democratic government, being nothing more than the composite will of its individual citizens, has no more moral power or authority than they do as individuals has adverse effects in other areas as well. It fosters civil disobedience, for example, which proceeds on the assumption that what the individual citizen considers an unjust law—even if it does not compel *him* to act unjustly—need not be obeyed. St. Paul would not agree. "Ye must needs be subject," he said, "not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake." For conscience sake. The reaction of people of faith to this tendency of democracy to obscure the divine authority behind government should not be resignation to it, but the resolution to combat it as effectively as possible. We have done that in this country (and continental Europe has not) by preserving in our public life many visible reminders that—in the words of a Supreme Court opinion from the 1940s—"we are a religious people, whose institutions presuppose a Supreme Being." These reminders include: "In God we trust" on our coins, "one nation, under God" in our Pledge of Allegiance, the opening of sessions of our legislatures with a prayer, the opening of sessions of my Court with "God save the United States and this Honorable Court," annual Thanksgiving proclamations issued by our President at the direction of Congress, and constant invocations of divine support in the speeches of our political leaders, which often con-

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clude, "God bless America." All this, as I say, is most un-European, and helps explain why our people are more inclined to understand, as St. Paul did, that government carries the sword as "the minister of God," to "execute wrath" upon the evildoer.

A brief story about the aftermath of September 11 nicely illustrates how different things are in secularized Europe. I was at a conference of European and American lawyers and jurists in Rome when the planes struck the twin towers. All in attendance were transfixed by the horror of the event, and listened with rapt attention to the President's ensuing address to the nation. When the speech had concluded, one of the European conferees—a religious man—confided in me how jealous he was that the leader of my nation could conclude his address with the words "God bless the United States." Such invocation of the deity, he assured me, was absolutely unthinkable in his country, with its Napoleonic tradition of extirpating religion from public life.

It will come as no surprise from what I have said that I do not agree with the encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* and the new Catholic catechism (or the very latest version of the new Catholic catechism), according to which the death penalty can only be imposed to protect rather than avenge, and that since it is (in most modern societies) not necessary for the former purpose, it is wrong. That, by the way, is how I read those documents—and not, as Avery Cardinal Dulles would read them, simply as an affirmation of two millennia of Christian teaching that retribution is a proper purpose (indeed, the principal purpose) of criminal punishment, but merely adding the "prudential judgment" that in modern circumstances condign retribution "rarely if ever" justifies death. (See "Catholicism & Capital Punishment," FT, April 2001.) I cannot square that interpretation with the following passage from the encyclical:

> It is clear that, for these [permissible purposes of penal justice] to be achieved, the nature and extent of the punishment must be carefully evaluated and decided upon, and ought not go to the extreme of executing the offender except in cases of absolute necessity: *in other words, when it would not be possible otherwise to defend society. Today, however, as a result of steady improvements in the organization of the penal system, such cases are very rare, if not practically nonexistent.* (Emphases deleted and added.)

It is true enough that the paragraph of the encyclical that precedes this passage acknowledges (in accord with traditional Catholic teaching) that "the primary purpose of the punishment which society inflicts is 'to redress the disorder caused by the offense'" by "imposing on the offender an adequate punishment for the crime." But it seems to me quite impossible to interpret the later passage's phrase "when it would not be possible otherwise to defend society" as including "defense" through the redress of disorder achieved by adequate punishment. Not only does the word "defense" not readily lend itself to that strange interpretation, but the immediately following explanation of why, in modern times, "defense" rarely if ever requires capital punishment *has no bearing whatever upon the adequacy of retribution.* In fact, one might say that it has an *inverse* bearing.

How in the world can modernity's "steady improvements in the organization of the penal system" render the death penalty less condign for a particularly heinous crime? One might think that commitment to a really horrible penal system (Devil's Island, for example) might be almost as bad as death. But nice clean cells with television sets, exercise rooms, meals designed by nutritionists, and conjugal visits? That would seem to render the death penalty more, rather than less, necessary. So also would the greatly increased capacity for evil—the greatly increased power to produce moral "disorder"—placed in individual hands by modern technology. Could St. Paul or St. Thomas even have envisioned a crime by an individual (as opposed to one by a ruler, such as Herod's slaughter of the innocents) as enormous as that of Timothy McVeigh or of the men who destroyed three thousand innocents in the World Trade Center? If just retribution is a legitimate purpose (indeed, the principal legitimate purpose) of capital punishment, can one possibly say with a straight face that nowadays death would "rarely if ever" be appropriate?

So I take the encyclical and the latest, hot-off-the-presses version of the catechism (a supposed encapsulation of the "deposit" of faith and the Church's teaching regarding a moral order that does not change) to mean that retribution is not a valid purpose of capital punishment. Unlike such other hard Catholic doctrines as the prohibition of birth control and of abortion, this is not a moral position that the Church has always—or indeed *ever before*—maintained. There have been Christian opponents of the death penalty, just as there have been Christian pacifists, but neither of those positions has ever been that of the Church. The current predominance of opposition to the death penalty is the legacy of Napoleon, Hegel, and Freud rather than St. Paul and St. Augustine. I mentioned earlier Thomas More, who has long been regarded in this country as the patron saint of lawyers, and who has recently been declared by the Vatican the patron saint of politicians (I am not sure that is a promotion). One of the charges leveled by that canonized saint's detractors was that, as Lord Chancellor, he was too quick to impose the death penalty.

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I am therefore happy to learn from the canonical experts I have consulted that the position set forth in *Evangelium Vitae* and in the latest version of the Catholic catechism does not purport to be binding teaching—that is, it need not be accepted by practicing Catholics, though they must give it thoughtful and respectful consideration. It would be remarkable to think otherwise—that a couple of paragraphs in an encyclical almost entirely devoted not to crime and punishment but to abortion and euthanasia was intended authoritatively to sweep aside (if one could) two thousand years of Christian teaching.

So I have given this new position thoughtful and careful consideration—and I disagree. That is not to say I favor the death penalty (I am judicially and judiciously neutral on that point); it is only to say that I do not find the death penalty immoral. I am happy to have reached that conclusion, because I like my job, and would rather not resign. And I am happy because I do not think it would be a good thing if American Catholics running for legislative office had to oppose the death penalty (most of them would not be elected); if American Catholics running for Governor had to promise commutation of all death sentences (most of them would never reach the Governor's mansion); if American Catholics were ineligible to go on the bench in all jurisdictions imposing the death penalty; or if American Catholics were subject to recusal when called for jury duty in capital cases.

I find it ironic that the Church's new (albeit nonbinding) position on the death penalty—which, if accepted, would have these *disastrous* consequences—is said to rest upon "prudential considerations." Is it prudent, when one is not certain enough about the point to proclaim it in a binding manner (and with good reason, given the long and consistent Christian tradition to the contrary), to effectively urge the retirement of Catholics from public life in a country where the federal government and thirty-eight of the states (comprising about 85 percent of the population) believe the death penalty is sometimes just and appropriate? Is it prudent to imperil acceptance of the Church's hard but traditional teachings on birth control and abortion and euthanasia (teachings that *have been* proclaimed in a binding manner, a distinction that the average Catholic layman is unlikely to grasp) by packaging them—under the wrapper "respect for life"—with another uncongenial doctrine *that everyone knows does not represent the traditional Christian view*? Perhaps, one is invited to conclude, all four of them are recently made-up. We need some new staffers at the Congregation of Prudence in the Vatican. At least the new doctrine should have been urged only upon secular Europe, where it is at home. FT

Good Friday

All souls, at Mass, knelt in supplication,
in the presence of the Lord, that holy day,
within the mercy of God, to silently pray
their worship to the King of all creation.
Till then, my heart was free from every care,
and calm, according to destiny's design;
but then, those eyes, far more noble than mine,
stole my reason and left me shaken and unaware.
Her vision struck me blind with disbelief,
being such a strange and exalted state:
this new angelic presence in my heart.
Is there no way that I can find relief?
And why, at birth, does human nature create
us all so different, and so far apart?

Luís de Camões (1524/25-1580)
Translated from the Portuguese by William Baer

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Race & Inequality: An Exchange

J. L. A. Garcia

The Anatomy of Racial Inequality. By Glenn C. Loury. *Harvard University Press. 226 pp. $22.95.*

During the 1980s, Glenn Loury was one of the most influential and formidable conservative thinkers on race in America. But beginning in the mid-1990s, he began to move leftward on the political spectrum. In addition to criticizing major conservative thinkers in print, including Dinesh D'Souza, Charles Murray, and Stephen and Abigail Thernstrom, he repudiated his old allies in their campaign against racial preference programs just as that campaign was starting to gain legislative and judicial traction. *The Anatomy of Racial Inequality* is Loury's first major publication since his ideological change of heart, and as such it has been eagerly awaited by current and former friends alike. The book's modest size—under 170 pages of text, with another thirty pages of tables and graphs as well as notes and bibliography—should not be taken as a sign of intellectual modesty. Rather than simply tracing the ways we classify people by race, Loury here wants to use that investigation to do nothing less than delineate and explain the long-lasting and deep-seated socioeconomic inequality between blacks and whites in the United States.

Loury begins his book by announcing his support for three "axioms" that will shape his discussion. These are, roughly, 1) that race is socially constructed, 2) that racially classified individuals have no common essence that can explain their superior or inferior social performance and achievement, and 3) that racial stigma is deeply ingrained and highly influential. Oddly, the first and third axioms do not really function as axioms, for Loury announces he will argue for and to them, not just from them. Moreover, in my judgment, he never succeeds in making a plausible case for the first axiom, and as I suggest below, his argument from the social effects of racial categorization fails to demonstrate the social reality of races, only of racial classification. As for the concept of stigma central to the third axiom, Loury never fully explains where stigma resides or how to combat it or its effects. When it comes to the second axiom, Loury seems not to recognize how uncontroversial it is and how little follows from its truth. With the possible exception of Murray, recent conservative thinkers on race (e.g., D'Souza, the Thernstroms, Thomas Sowell) do not impute black social failure and disadvantage to anything they deem (biologically or otherwise) essential to black people. Rather, they impute the problems of black Americans largely to antisocial and self-destructive attitudes, values, and conduct within that group.

Loury's first major concern has to do with racial stereotypes. Above all, he is interested in denying any kind of essentialism. There are no races in nature, but the place race-thinking plays in our interactions makes race a "human product." As he writes, he "use[s] the term 'race' to refer to a cluster of inheritable bodily markings carried by a largely endogamous group of individuals, markings that can be observed by others with ease, that can be changed or misrepresented only with great difficulty, and that have come to be invested in a particular society at a given historical moment with social meaning." This "definition," as Loury calls it, conceives race as "all about embodied social signification." Loury thinks this amounts to a "constructivist position in regard to the ontological status of race" because it allows that, owing to their being classed together as racially alike, "groups of subjects" who share feelings of pride, shame, etc., and who are defined by

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the race-markers, actually "come into existence" in the real world.

Although there may be some ambiguity in his position, all of this strongly indicates that Loury thinks race is a real attribute, even if only in the sense that it is a "social reality" constructed from social conventions. In my view, the philosopher Kwame Anthony Appiah has successfully refuted this argument. But because Loury cites and airily dismisses Appiah's anticipated critique, it is worth spelling out its force in some detail. The fact that some people are classified as Rs (where R is a racial assignment), and differentially treated because of that classification, proves only that racial *classification* has real effects, not that race itself is real, socially or in any other way. To see this, Appiah suggests we consider a social system that classifies people as witches. That I am so classified and suffer because of it does nothing to show that I am (or that anyone is or could be) a witch. Whether I am a witch depends on whether I have the qualities predicated of me (i.e., attributed to me) when people say I am a witch.

To determine whether races are real, we must study racial discourse to determine just what is being predicated of someone when he is said to be, say, black. Then we need to determine whether he or anyone has those qualities. In contrast, Loury's emphasis on the "all too real consequences" of "the social convention of [racial] classification" is irrelevant to the question of whether there really is in nature something that divides people into racial groups. A man being a full professor or a pastor, a green piece of paper being money—these are "social constructs" in the sense that to be such a thing is to occupy a role within some institution established by and within human society. It is very doubtful that being a member of the black race can be similarly analyzed. By failing to distinguish between the "social signification" of race-classification and the question whether those classifications are accurate (i.e., whether races are real), Loury becomes entangled in a conceptual thicket.

We might also note a second problem in this view of race, one that may appear insignificant, but that proves to be quite problematic. As we have seen, Loury does not specify whether each member of a given racial group will possess determinate traits. Yet to insist, as Loury does, that *every* member of the black race must have physical features that "are easily discerned and not readily disguised" is to ignore the possibility (and often ease) of racial "passing." As Walter Benn Michaels has argued against Adrian Piper's presentation of a view similar to Loury's, to root blackness in how it is perceived by others is to deny the possibility, very real and much discussed in such classics of African-American literature as James Weldon Johnson's *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*, that a person can be black while pretending he isn't. This might be a small problem that Loury could correct by defining a black person as a member of a group *most* of whose members have hard-to-disguise, racially distinctive features, or is someone descended from such people. But this may be more than a minor alteration of Loury's views. For how can he set the conditions of group membership without appeal to those very natural, biological features it seems the point of his "social constructivist" position to avoid? If society can be mistaken in assigning someone to a racial group, then there must be something more to someone's race-membership than social assignment.

For Loury, the most important stereotypes are those that are "self-confirming." By this he means that their popular acceptance negatively affects the stereotyped group to such an extent that it gives them reason to respond in ways that conform to the stereotype. Thus, if Xs are widely thought to be, say, cheap, lazy, and mistrustful, then Xs may find themselves in such economically and socially constrained circumstances that it becomes reasonable to hoard what resources they can accumulate, to give up on trying to advance themselves through effort, to be suspicious, and so on. In short, they may *become* cheap, lazy, and mistrustful. In this way, the stereotype's widespread and lasting acceptance gives its victims a practical reason to admit to it—thus providing, in turn, evidence of the stereotype's truth, even if such evidence was originally lacking. What starts out as merely irrational prejudice can thus become more rationally warranted.

We should take note of something unsettling in this line of thought, however inventive it may be. That is, it seeks to explain how a stereotype can come to be rational rather than questioning the appropriateness of stereotyping as such. There is simply something distasteful in seeking to explain the truth in ethnic stereotypes—why, for example, Jews are cheap, blacks are indolent, whites are bigoted, Midwesterners are boorish, and so forth. Instead, we should try to explain why people believe these things, *even though they are false and unsupported.*

And yet, Loury persists in his approach because he believes that his two core claims—that races are social constructs and that certain racial stereotypes can and do operate to confirm themselves—can ground his anti-essentialism. The book does not clearly explicate this connection, but I think Loury means the argument to run along the following lines. Even when there is truth within racial stereotypes and when their acceptance finds some rational support, the generalizations' truth is not rooted in the biology, nature, or metaphysics of the racial group or its members—for races themselves are only humanly constructed parts of social reality—but in social feedback mechanisms. To put the

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point in starker terms than Loury does, he seems to be arguing that even if and when black people are, for example, disproportionately "low energy," this is the case not because of some tendency or character defect inhering in the biological, moral, or metaphysical essence of black people, but rather in social expectations that lead blacks to conclude that it is not unreasonable to become less energetic.

As I have already suggested, this line of argument seems not to rebut the conservative adversaries Loury wishes to target. Even D'Souza explains what he calls black "failure" by appealing not to a black racial essence (that would be racism as D'Souza conceives it, a doctrine he is at pains to repudiate), but to elements of a black culture that even he recognizes are responses to the historical circumstances of blacks in the United States. But Loury has another reason for revisiting and newly elaborating the notion of self-confirming stereotypes. He does so in order to argue that, ultimately, racial stereotypes are rooted in something bigger, less rational, and far uglier: racial stigma.

The core of Loury's book, and the topic that will, I think, draw the most comment and stimulate the most research, is not stereotype, but stigma. The idea is not new, but Loury gives it a careful and novel construal and uses it as centerpiece of some arguments bound to provoke contention. Loury never fully explicates the difference between racial stereotypes and stigma, but, in his most explicit effort, he writes that while stereotypes merely associate subjects with qualities prior to adequate information, stigma "invokes the observer's . . . perception of qualities thought to be essential to the make-up of the subject." Stigma, he continues, "is some kind of 'meta-belief,' . . . a belief by the observer . . . about the subject's intrinsic nature," which is thought to account for the other associated qualities. Less lucidly, Loury suggests that stereotypes answer to our need for "information," while stigma supplies our need for "meaning."

Adapting Erving Goffman's influential account of social stigma, Loury writes that "when the meanings connoted by race-symbols undermine an observing agent's ability to see their bearer as a person possessing a common humanity with the observer . . . then I will say that this person is 'racially stigmatized,' and that the group to which he belongs suffers a 'spoiled collective identity.'" The idea seems to be that if, upon hearing only that my neighbor is a Jewish man, I assume he is bookish and puny, I have employed a stereotype. However, if, after learning of the Nazis' attempt to exterminate the Jews, I respond not with outrage, but with the thought that Jews are so deeply, even essentially, despicable that such episodes are understandable, then I'm approaching stigma.

Loury contends that, because of slavery and its aftermath, African-Americans suffer "racial dishonor . . . [and] an entrenched if inchoate presumption of inferiority, of moral inadequacy, of unfitness for intimacy, of intellectual incapacity, harbored by observing agents when they regard the race-marked subjects." However, Loury goes on to insist that this stigma and dishonor are not "mainly an issue of the personal attitudes of individual Americans," because he is "discussing social meanings, not attitudes." For Loury, stigma concerns the "unexamined beliefs that influence how citizens understand and interpret" the events and conditions around them, as opposed to the fear, unease, hostility, distrust, and contempt that some whites feel toward blacks.

Racial stigma thus consists of "social cognitions"—beliefs and, as Loury emphasizes, doubts—that incline people to view, for instance, "veterans [as] acceptable beneficiaries of" government help and (largely white) drug buyers as fit for therapy, while believing that government programs that are designed to help blacks "violat[e] meritocracy" and that (largely black) drug sellers are fit only for prison. These examples, however, are unpersuasive. Plainly, selling drugs demonstrates a deeper involvement in crime than does using them, and the limits of policing likely motivate law enforcement to target sellers rather than users. And even those of us untroubled by the fact and magnitude of government social welfare programs can see that their basis is different from that of the benefits we provide to veterans who risked their lives in our defense. It is unfortunate that Loury ignores such details, contenting himself instead with imputing sinister "social cognitions" to those who think such differences make a difference.

Loury clearly states that stigma leads people to call into question the common humanity of the stigmatized, or, less hyperbolically but more vaguely, to stress the "social otherness" of black people. He is less clear about whose minds the stigma resides in. Of course his reader assumes it is found chiefly among whites. And yet Loury stresses that "nothing in my theory prevents a black man from succumbing to the same cognitive biases as anyone else." The point may have some import. If racial stigma also infects black minds, with black people sometimes suspecting their own worth and ability, then it may operate in part through forms of self-doubt, resentment, self-destructiveness, and despair. Loury does not explore these possibilities, but insofar as his analysis permits them, then his former allies on the right, who think many of the problems of black Americans are self-caused, may find in Loury's work grist for their own mill.

Just as Loury is less than explicit about whose minds stigma resides in, neither does he clearly specify who bears the racial stigma. He observes that "the stigmatized 'racial other' in our midst today is unlikely to be wearing a business suit or an athlete's uniform," sug-

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gesting that stigma is reserved to the have-nots; but he adds, in a carefully worded sentence, that he has "no need for the exaggerated and indefensible assumption that stigma hampers social achievement for all blacks—universally and to the same degree." The final qualifiers may indicate that Loury thinks all blacks do bear the racial stigma, though some do so only to a lesser extent.

This raises the question of what may be done both to lessen stigma itself and, what may be a different matter, to alleviate its effects. In a section of the book titled "Racial Stigma at Work in America," Loury traces a variety of phenomena—from the disproportionately high incarceration rate of blacks and federal anti-drug policy to welfare reform, the race-and-I.Q. controversy, and photojournalistic depictions of poverty—to racial stigma. As a social scientist, Loury is no doubt aware that there is little evidence that these phenomena can all be traced to the workings of stigma. Yet throughout the discussion he intimates that sinister, dehumanizing "cognitions" are at work behind the scenes.

This questionable approach to the problem of race leads Loury to believe that the best way to diminish the effects of stigma is to eliminate it altogether. One way to do so involves reducing the black prison population through the reform of drug laws and the use of alternate sentencing. Once the proportion of black inmates declined, the stigma would receive significantly less confirmation. Still, there are surely other, less radical ways to attack racial stigma. Harsher punishments might enhance deterrence and thus lessen black crime and the incarceration that inevitably follows. Policies could be designed to insure not that fewer blacks are imprisoned, but that more whites are. Finally, as Loury is well aware, the racial-image problem could be addressed by highlighting black achievement and success.

All of which means that we would do well to explore alternatives to the policies to which Loury appears most sympathetic. It makes little sense to describe the black incarceration rate as being too high or too low without considering the incidence of black crime. The issue is and must remain not *how many* are imprisoned but whether they *deserve* it. Yet Loury is more concerned with the injustice that follows from racial stigma, even if it means giving clemency to criminals. In his view, imprisonment not only increases stigma but also deprives black communities of valuable members. But does it really? If pushers, users, and small-time hoods were released from prison, would they become model citizens? I am no social scientist, but New York City's experience with so-called "zero-tolerance" policing seems to indicate just the opposite. The evidence appears to show that jailing minor offenders removes the criminally inclined from the streets before they can commit more serious crimes.

In any case, we ought not lose sight of the obvious fact that people who have committed serious crimes deserve to be imprisoned. Loury might protest that such claims lack "objective, scientific warrant," but that argument lacks force. Of course, science cannot justify moral judgments, but that applies at least as much to Loury's moral complaints about racial injustice as it does to less controversial judgments, such as the conviction that those guilty of serious crimes merit prison irrespective of their race. The imprisonment of the guilty raises no issues of injustice. Yes, we should look to the environmental factors that predispose some to succumb to the corruption that can be found inside all of us. But more importantly, we must resist the corruption that saps our moral confidence. With such confidence restored, we may actually make serious advances in the projects of moral correction, penitence, and reform required in our prisons. I agree with Loury's opposition to the view that we need only "warehouse" our wrongdoers, black or white. Still, we can do more while also justly punishing those who act viciously.

Loury intends his discussions of stereotype and stigma to set the stage for his concluding arguments about "racial justice" and political strategies. In my view, Loury makes a good case against "race-blind" conservatives, showing that they have failed to make a moral case against allowing race to play some limited but direct role in both preferential programs and assessing outcomes. However, his insistence on "race-egalitarianism" is less persuasive, focusing too little on individuals and hastily identifying disparity between racial groups as racial injustice. More disturbing still, he sets no principled limit to race-conscious policies, even going so far as to suggest that consideration of criminal laws should take account of whether those convicted under them will largely be black.

On the controversial issue of reparations, Loury is at his best. He avoids the ugly denial, found in such anti-reparations writers as David Horowitz, that America owes a debt to her black citizens. Loury argues more subtly that we are ill-advised to construe this debt too literally, because, to the extent we do, we imply that the nation might properly see itself as having completed its racial reckoning once a specified sum of money has been transferred from whites to blacks. The problem of race in America is not a black problem but our American problem, and it cannot be "solved" by some of us paying off others.

Less encouraging is Loury's defensiveness in the face of justified criticism of the vicious transvaluated "values" expressed and promoted in so much of black popular culture. Surely, star athletes who use drugs, spit on umpires, choke coaches, or bite opponents—not to mention hip-hop lyricists, performers, producers, and

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music promoters who portray black women as "bitches" or "'hos" and Black men as "Niggaz," who glorify "gangsta chic" and glory in a culture of guns and violence, despite their seven and eight figure incomes—play an important role in perpetuating the stigma Loury decries. Yet this defensiveness is less apparent in Loury's coda, where he suggests that personal action and attitudes, abetted by moral suasion and subtly indirect social policy, can effect genuine change. Even conservatives could accept this conclusion.

Sometimes Loury appears, like so many others at all places on the political spectrum, to hope for a "post-racial future." Eventually, he hopes, racial stigma and its consequences will fade, especially among whites but of necessity also among blacks, and the remaining obstacles to transracial adoption, mixed-race parenting, housing and educational integration, a shared culture, and American community will be removed. If stigma does its harm largely through "discrimination in contact" in our private lives, it will be dissolved most effectively by eliminating social isolation and linking whites to blacks in civil society, not just as citizens, but also as neighbors, classmates, congregants, in-laws, cousins, aunts and uncles, nephews and nieces.

I think all this suggests that the analysis and recommendations from Loury—at his best a bridge figure between right and left—might point towards a promising and nonpartisan racial agenda. That agenda would integrate some of his suggestions with other policies and proposals that would seem to follow the spirit of his analysis. That broader agenda might strive 1) to mend affirmative action short-term—no "theorem" having been proved, as Loury mordantly notes, that shows that race-conscious policies hinder racism's demise—but also look to end it long-term through a gradual phase-out; 2) to downplay racial thinking in our personal lives, while recognizing that responsible public policy will need to recognize racial categories for some time to come, even as we steadfastly refuse to let the state determine what is most important in our lives and minds; 3) to continue to reform our reformed welfare system, increasing funding and extending the term of benefits in times of recession, but also retaining the incentives to work and leave the system; 4) to confront the magnitude of black incarceration rates in conjunction with that of black crime rates, imprisoning those we ought, but making time served an opportunity for moral reform, not brutality, dehumanization, and further education in criminality; 5) to execrate the elements of popular culture, black and white, that celebrate obvious viciousness, while recognizing that it is despair and nihilism that make them appealing; and 6) to recognize the seriousness of our racial divide, not necessarily as a continuing injustice, but as an enemy of comity and community in our society.

That agenda will address imperfections not just in our institutions but in personal lives and relations. In the phrase that gave his earlier book its title, Loury said that African-Americans would find social advancement "one by one, from the inside out." That is no less true of our becoming a more genuine community.

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John McWhorter

In the 1980s and early 1990s, Glenn Loury vied with Thomas Sowell for the title of America's most prominent black conservative thinker. Long before I began to write on race or even thought of doing so, I clipped pieces by the black economist at Boston University whose elegant and forceful writings were among the very few that seemed to reflect my own experience of race in the United States. For blacks of my generation, the overt racism of the pre-civil rights era was an ugly memory fast fading into the past, and the black middle class many of us were part of was well-established and expanding rapidly. Yet the Black Power trope that equated black authenticity with eliciting white guilt had already begun to freeze into a reflexive posture of belligerence, as the war on drugs fostered the myth of a "war on black men."

Although the black battle for full equality had not been entirely won by the early 1990s, the racial events of that decade sadly demonstrated that the civil rights establishment had begun to encourage a manner of thinking and acting that showed every sign of increasing the obstacles to further black advancement. Al Sharpton, who had risen to prominence defending a young black girl's false rape charge against white policemen, all but incited a black-Jewish race riot in Brooklyn. Black thugs destroyed their own neighborhoods and maimed many nonwhites in the wake of the Rodney King verdict. Black America cheered as O. J. Simpson was acquitted of a brutal double murder when evidence strongly suggested his guilt. A black-led school board insisted that black students lag behind white ones because the former are confused by the small differences between black and standard dialect, and dismissed the skepticism of critics as racism.

The moral lines of the race question have certainly shifted since Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream."

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Loury was one of the few black writers to recognize that blacks could thrive under less-than-perfect conditions, that self-empowerment did far more good for blacks than melodramatically tabulating instances of "racism," and that blacks sabotage their own chances when they celebrate black underclass behaviors that, whatever their origins in larger social forces, work to sustain negative racial stereotypes. Shelby Steele made a similar case in 1991 in *The Content of our Character*, and it is not an accident that Loury and Steele cofounded the Center for New Black Leadership in 1995, an organization dedicated to a conservative but activist message of black uplift, a message that found eloquent expression in Loury's book of the same year, *One by One from the Inside Out*.

But by the late 1990s, a series of personal crises began to lead Loury to question his earlier views. He could no longer support the growing criticism of racial preferences in the form of affirmative action, and his discomfort with this core element of the conservative agenda developed into outright opposition with Ward Connerly's stunning success in getting Proposition 209 passed in California. Loury broke with the Center for New Black Leadership, and then a significant change began to crop up in his writings. For example, a hostile review of Stephen and Abigail Thernstrom's *America in Black and White* revealed a new orientation as much threnodic as analytic. This new direction was one that most black leftists would applaud. Loury's "coming out" became official in a series of lectures at Harvard in 2000. His new book, *The Anatomy of Racial Inequality*, is an elaboration and adaptation of those lectures.

The central theme of Loury's book is that the main obstacle to advancement for black Americans today is less overt discrimination than the looming "stigma" of inferiority that whites impose upon them. Loury repeatedly refrains from describing this as "racism" per se. Rather, he notes that human beings tend to cast their thought about others according to generalizations, along the lines of the paradigms that, according to Thomas Kuhn, both drive and limit scientific inquiry. Loury notes that people are motivated as much by a desire for social belonging as they are by strict rationality and cost-benefit analysis, and they often form their beliefs accordingly. The tendency to generalize is reinforced by the fact that few people have enough information at their disposal to enable them to acquire a more nuanced understanding of individuals. As a result of these tendencies as they operate within the American racial context, black people today suffer from what Loury calls a *reward bias*. That is, no longer confronting *development bias*—in which the opportunity to be economically productive citizens is denied—they instead confront a bias in which reward for their economic efforts is limited in a variety of ways by a racial stigma of "otherness" that white Americans project onto blacks. Loury describes this as a difference between *discrimination in contract* and *discrimination in contact*.

Loury traces the stigma to blacks' degraded condition under slavery, and builds his analysis on Erving Goffman's *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*, which defined stigma as a discrepancy between the understanding of one's identity as constructed "from the inside" and that imputed to one "from the outside." Loury presents what he regards as various manifestations of the stigma in question, including the fact that only 2 percent of black women have white husbands, the reluctance of many nonblacks to adopt black babies, and especially the failure of mainstream Americans to view the large numbers of blacks living in inner cities or penned into prisons as the national tragedy that it truly is. As he writes,

> If there were a comparable number of young European-American men on beer-drinking binges, or anorexic teenage girls starving themselves to death, and if these were situations in which the same degree of human suffering was engendered as is being produced in this case, it would occasion a most profound reflection about what had gone wrong, not only with them, but also with us. "What manner of people are we to produce such an outcome?" would become a key question.

Finally, appalled at conservatives' call for blacks to "get beyond" race and view themselves as free-acting individuals, Loury stresses that the American tradition of liberal individualism, however attractive in theory, neglects historical context. Above all, it ignores the fact that the stigma against African-Americans determines individual interactions so profoundly that blacks cannot and should not attempt to see themselves as ahistorical individuals. For Loury, race-blindness in a policy can be a good thing, but what he terms "race-indifference" never is.

Take, for example, the University of Texas' policy of admitting the top 10 percent of students from all schools in the state. The policy is technically race-blind, addressing differentials in school quality across the state. Yet the policy, obviously developed to maintain representative levels of black students and acknowledge that disproportionate numbers of them have limited access to top-quality educations, is not race-indifferent, according to Loury, but rather what he calls race-egalitarian.

In the end, Loury sees race-blindness as appropriate only to the realm of "civic construction": "building monuments, constructing public narratives, enacting ritu-

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als, and, most generally, pursuing policies that have an inescapably expressive as well as directly instrumental effect." In other words, race-blindness should be confined, in our moment, largely to symbolic realms tangential to achievement or opportunity. Beyond this, the ideological purity of liberal individualism will have to wait. Loury defines his treatise as "an exercise in 'racial apologetics,'" intending a parallel to the Christian theological virtue of defending "the reasonableness of the faith."

While many black conservatives no doubt see Loury as a Prodigal Son whose guilt about having abandoned the reigning faith of his people has led him to proclaim it anew, there is actually much of value in Loury's new position, at least in its foundations.

For one thing, he admits that formal discrimination against blacks has become so marginal and readily prosecuted that it no longer warrants serious attention in discussions of race. Loury has no patience with the claim, heard so often today, that decades after the Civil Rights Act, black Americans still live in an overtly racist purgatory where "white supremacy" continues to reign. Loury consistently resists the temptation to employ the word "racism" as a moral bludgeon, as many on the black left have come to do, and this shows good judgment as well as moral fiber.

Moreover, Loury is right to note that, even though the notion of race is a scientific fiction, the concept so determines our experience and understanding of the world that it cannot be dismissed as a mere "figment of the pigment." On this matter, many white and black conservatives would disagree, wishing to deny the reality of race. But such a view is almost willfully naive. The history of blacks in America renders raceless individualism a formal, civics-textbook abstraction that helps us little in our quest to develop effective social policies. Loury's book is an articulate and compelling elucidation of the subtle persistence of racial thinking in America.

The problems arise when Loury begins to draw practical conclusions from his solid foundations and ends up articulating a view that suffers from a weakness typical of left-wing proposals. "Apologetics" can easily evolve into excuse-making. Although Loury wants to believe that his new ideology can be used as a guide to change, it ends up providing legitimation to the view that history is destiny for black people. Articulately rendered as it is, this position ends up resembling more a static *cri de coeur* than a dynamic blueprint for progress.

It is in elevating "stigma" to the central problem in black America that Loury's argument drifts from prescription into posture. According to Loury, what we really need to be talking about is less the figment of the pigment than "the enigma of the stigma." The phrase's evocation of Jesse Jackson's rhyming oratorical style is not an accident. A quiet endorsement of leftist positions can be detected throughout the text, at least to the extent that Loury implies that such positions express a higher morality, whose virtue could only be denied by those lacking adequate information or guilty of hardheartedness. While I respect Loury's elegant presentation of his argument and sympathize with his sincere desire to improve material conditions for blacks in America, I cannot accept the underlying assumptions of his view as self-evident.

For one thing, Loury bases his analysis on a highly questionable version of black history, especially in light of his earlier work. He asserts repeatedly that pathological behaviors among poor blacks are direct legacies of slavery and its aftermath, arguing that "the self-limiting patterns of behavior among poor blacks are not a product of some alien cultural imposition on a pristine Euro-American canvas. . . . [They] evolved in tandem with American political and economic institutions." The result is that "opportunity to acquire productivity is unequally available to the members of distinct racial groups." The implication here is that the underclass both developed and persists because of the "enigma of the stigma."

Loury's concern with the underclass is certainly justified. Even in his earlier work, Loury was never one to dismiss the ills of the ghetto with impatient calls for its residents to get up, brush themselves off, and "come early and stay late." In retrospect, the eventual parting of the ways between Loury and Shelby Steele is unsurprising given Steele's comparative lack of interest in the underclass question in *The Content of Our Character.* But at the same time, I always cherished Loury's earlier work for his rejection of the notion that because of the occasional passing "racist" slight, "the tragedy of black America" encompassed the lives of the legions of middle-class black people like myself, whom the civil rights revolution had granted an existence unthinkable to my ancestors. At some points in his new book, Loury holds to his past views: "I have no need here for the exaggerated and indefensible assumption that stigma hampers social advancement for all blacks—universally and to the same degree."

In other words, most blacks have managed to better their economic and social condition, despite racial "stigma." Yet Loury's historical analysis of the underclass misses the implication of this admission: namely, that the stigma, though it is real, is not as decisive a problem as he claims. It won't do to dismiss *most* of black America as an "exception." More likely, some factor beyond the stigma has been at work with those left behind, and the job of black intellectuals and academics today must be to venture beyond blaming residual racism to identify this underlying factor.

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When Loury writes that the behavior of the underclass in the ghettoes of America is a result of "structures of human development that are biased because of a history of deprivation and racial oppression," he implies that the violence, illegitimacy, crime, and desolation of today's inner cities can be traced back directly to slavery and Reconstruction. Yet as he surely knows, the poor black ghettos of pre-1965 America were largely stable communities. There were certainly drugs (as depicted in Claude Brown's *Manchild in the Promised Land*, for example), but they hardly dominated and decimated the inner cities until the 1970s. Loury considers Orlando Patterson's linkage of inner city illegitimacy rates to patterns etched under slavery as "persuasive." But the two-parent family, while by no means universal, was the norm even in poor black communities until the 1960s. Meanwhile, black employment rates nationwide were on the rise in the 1960s, before welfare policies were expanded.

Loury is certainly aware of these facts. But his new ideological commitment seems to have distracted him from what these facts indicate: that the unique horror of today's inner city is due less to slavery's legacy than to the rise of the New Left in the 1960s.

Black Power ideology taught many blacks that opposition to mainstream norms was a mark of authentic "blackness," while whites, now guilty about the past, mistook pity for uplift and tempted black America with free rides (expanded AFDC policies) and lowered standards (racial preferences) that discouraged millions of black people from trying their hardest, or even from having any way of learning what serious effort entails. Thankfully, millions of black people transcended the new culture of pity and now constitute a large and growing black middle class. But human individuals vary in aspiration and capability, and so it is no surprise that a substantial number of blacks came to believe what the New Left told them and became trapped in the culture of poverty unintentionally produced by social programs constructed by guilty whites. The result was the black "underclass," which now perpetuates itself, as cultures are wont to do.

This suggests that what stands between the underclass and achievement today—why these people are so disinclined to "come early and stay late"—is less a stigma imposed from the outside than cultural resistance to positive engagement with American society. Such an interpretation was once a cornerstone of Loury's writings. He persuasively argued that white pity had reinforced the problems it had intended to solve, and that while the government owed blacks some assistance in bettering themselves, the underclass would be forever lost without rekindling the self-direction and inner strength of its members.

But that was then. In his new book, Loury limits acceptable explanations to social obstacles:

> One can show that the rewards accruing to the members of the disadvantaged group, given their productivity, are lower than the rewards garnered by others. Or one can show that, owing to processes unrelated to their innate capabilities, members of the disadvantaged racial group lack opportunity to realize their productive potential.

Acknowledgments of the conservative philosophy he once espoused are rare and dismissive:

> Hence, while there may be a grain of truth in the insistence by conservatives that cultural differences lie at the root of racial disparity in the United States, the deeper truth is that, for some three centuries now, political, social, and economic institutions that by any measure must be seen as racially oppressive have distorted the communal experience of the slaves and their descendants.

One longs for Loury to seriously address the conservative positions he once espoused, if even to refute them. Instead he says:

> We would never tell the antagonists in a society divided by religion to desist from worshiping their false god. But this, in effect, is what many critics today are saying to black Americans who simply refuse to "get over it."

But isn't the greatest of all false gods the assumption that a people can only achieve in the absence of "stigma"? After all, stigma has not held back *most* black families since the Civil Rights Act. It is also germane that the underclass, a highly segregated community, interacts much less frequently with whites than middle-class blacks do and thus would presumably be less subject to the subtle effects of "discrimination in contact." Nowhere does Loury demonstrate that the attempts of poor blacks to better themselves are thwarted by "reward bias."

The view that a residual and covert racism is as urgent a tragedy as the overt and legally sanctioned discrimination of the past is based less on facts and evidence than post-1960s ideological faith, as Elizabeth Lasch-Quinn so brilliantly showed in her sadly underacknowledged *Race Experts*, published last fall. Loury often dismisses the liberal individualist argument as "simplistic," but I fear that his approach to history is subject to the same charge.

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Equally problematic is Loury's related claim that stigma is maintained through low expectations of blacks becoming self-fulfilling prophecies. This analysis applies flawlessly to the position of blacks under slavery, and even for the hundred years following their emancipation. But applied to modern America, it generates as many questions as answers. Loury gives the hypothetical example of an employer who presumes that blacks are less competent and thus takes special notice of the mistakes of black employees. The excessive negative feedback in turn teaches blacks that hard work is unrewarded. Hence they learn to underperform, which only serves to reinforce the stigma. The same kind of pattern applies in the instance of taxi drivers in New York City routinely passing by black men for fear of being robbed. As a result, law-abiding black men stop riding in cabs, thereby increasing the percentage of riders who hail cabs in order to rob them. Thus the stigma is reinforced, and so on.

This analysis of racial stigma is nimble but no more than suggestive; it begs for careful, extended argument. I was at first intrigued, and anticipated that Loury would provide scholarly, or even journalistic, support to back up his claims. But instead he presents these and two other cases of stigma as mere hypotheticals of his own fashioning. This is especially problematic given that liberals frequently attack the use of mere "anecdote" in the arguments of black conservatives. This is a charge frequently leveled at my *Losing the Race: Self-Sabotage in Black America*, for example. And indeed, one of the best things about Loury's past work is that he usually avoided sensationalistic stories in favor of sober, rational analysis. I am thus disappointed to see him basing one of the linchpins of his argument on speculative surmises of this kind.

The stigma may have begun with unjust preconceptions of Africans and slaves on the part of whites, but today we are a long way from Dred Scott, and current circumstances for black Americans are simply more complex than Loury allows. Today, blacks themselves contribute in important ways to reinforcing the stigma by embracing a post-civil rights "oppositional identity." To be sure, blacks would not have taken so readily to this emotional crutch if they had not been brought here as slaves and treated wretchedly for centuries, and the trope has been sadly reinforced by public policies and social conventions motivated more by pity than respect. But the fact remains that the troubles of inner-city blacks cannot so easily be reduced to an analysis of white bias.

For instance, Loury believes that the prosecutorial focus on drug sales among poor blacks is merely a product of stigma. His evidence is that drug enforcement officials pay less attention to drug use among white middle-class youth. However, the fact remains that the sentencing laws on drug sales were toughened as a response to the hideous violence that plagued the drug trade in the inner cities during the 1980s—and that at the time the change was heartily supported by the Congressional Black Caucus. When it comes to drug policy, there is a significant difference between white teens selling each other drugs to use in their parents' basements and gun-toting hoodlums terrorizing their neighborhoods in drug-trade turf wars.

Yes, the punishment for possession has proven overly punitive in some cases. But surely Loury doesn't mean to argue that inner city black-on-black homicides have any substantial connection to "discrimination in contact" with whites. Most residents of inner cities wish the police would come down even harder on the dealers infesting their neighborhoods and have little interest in seeing limited law-enforcement resources redirected to suburban high schools in the name of equal treatment. Stigma, it seems, is considerably less crucial than Loury supposes. Do we not risk a certain self-indulgence in focusing so steadfastly on white attitudes when it is black people who are preying upon one another with such abandon in urban ghettos with nary a white person in sight?

Regardless of the many possible objections to his doing so, Loury focuses on the stigma throughout his book, and this leads to his most serious lapse. I have suggested that Loury's argument is more a description than a prescription. Yet he wants it to be something more: he intends it as a new paradigm that will lead to future improvement for blacks. The problem, however, is that the notion of the stigma leads him to advocate self-contradictory proposals.

On the one hand, Loury argues that it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, for individuals to free themselves from group-based preconceptions. We are all, as he deftly puts it, "'cognitive prisoners' inside a symbolic world of our own unwitting construction." Hence the inescapability of the stigma for black Americans. Yet on the other hand, Loury also believes we must attack and move beyond the stigma. But how can we do so when we are trapped in our "cognitive prisons"?

Loury proposes racial preferences in university admissions as an important element in any attempt to eliminate or at least diminish the stigma because it supposedly forces whites to interact with black students in high-achievement settings. "Teaching that 'not all blacks think alike' will be much easier when there are enough blacks around to show their diversity of thought," he counsels. But surely Loury is aware that black opinion on college campuses rarely strays from the far left and that entire university bureaucracies exist for the sole purpose of inculcating the view that black people are eternal victims. Today there are few better ways for a

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white person to learn that all blacks think alike than to spend four years at a university. Moreover, Loury himself uses the current situation on college campuses as yet another illustration of the stigma in action; apparently colleges expect less of black students, which leads the students not to try as hard, which, in turn, only confirms the expectation. How continuing or expanding current policies will remedy this situation is somewhat less than clear.

The same dynamic affects his other practical proposals. Loury is incensed that America is so unmoved by the numbers of black men placed in prison by the so-called War on Drugs. But would it diminish the stigma if these men were allowed to stay on the streets plying their violent trade? Loury criticizes welfare reform for leaving poor blacks at risk of suffering unduly in recessions. But does he really mean to imply that the stigma would be less punishing if welfare had gone unreformed, and single women continued to be paid to have children out of wedlock? In his controversial review of the Thernstroms' book, Loury memorably assailed the authors for blindness to the "pathos" of the black condition, and he has described his ideological conversion as stemming from a sense that his earlier writings did nothing to help his own people. But does he really believe that the mere exploration and acknowledgment of this pathos constitutes, in itself, a solution to black problems?

A *New York Times Magazine* article on Loury last January posed the important question of whether there was any ideological continuity between the old Loury and the new one. Having searched through his new book for a point of contact between the two positions, I have failed to find one. Nor can I identify any events over the past ten years to explain why he would find his new views more appropriate or constructive. On the contrary, virtually everyone acknowledges that welfare reform has contributed to improving underclass lives. Moreover, the proportion of blacks who are poor shrank constantly through the 1990s. Even the rates of black admission to UC Berkeley have risen every year since racial preferences were abolished there.

At the end of the day, I fear that Loury's new position makes sense only in personal or emotional terms. I write this not to dwell sensationalistically on the ad hominem, but rather to give Loury his due. If it is true that neither recent developments in America nor any fundamental defect in Loury's earlier work can provide an explanation for the significant changes in his views, we are left with two possibilities. Either Loury's leftward lurch is an example of opportunism, or, as is much more likely, it arose from his inability or unwillingness to live with the vicious and persistent attacks by prominent members of the black community that black conservatives have to face on a daily basis.

I recall a party I attended several years ago, where there were several middle-class, college-educated blacks. As happens so often in such settings, the conversation drifted into race issues. When I brought up Shelby Steele's book, a charming forty-something man with some involvement in black community affairs asserted that "the idea that the problem with black people is black people themselves—I'm sorry, but I just can't accept that." And, indeed, he couldn't: throughout the rest of the conversation he refused to budge from the usual cavils about sentencing discrepancies regarding crack versus powdered cocaine, O. J. Simpson's interracial marriage having been what rendered his murder case so riveting to America, Rodney King, and so forth. These aperçus were and are typical, and Loury has no doubt spent much of the past two decades enduring constant attacks from people of this persuasion for being a sellout to his race, for encouraging whites to "take us back to the past." Nothing infuriates such critics more than the thought that an educated black man of influence would stray beyond the accepted script of reminding whites that "America is still a deeply racist country."

My sense that Loury's new line has been constructed to assuage precisely this sort of person is based on the fact that he now carefully avoids engagement with any obstacle to black achievement rooted in black culture itself. Such avoidance is the hallmark of mainstream black writing and scholarship and so would normally warrant little attention. But Loury once thought, and wrote, differently. In lieu of a substantive explanation for the change, we can only assume he has capitulated to his critics.

I find it hard to believe that Loury, with his crystal-clear capacity for perception and argument, is unaware of the fragilities in his reconstructed stance. More likely, he has made a decision to split the difference between intelligent engagement with the facts of the black American experience and his own hunger for social belonging.

To be sure, Loury presents his new ideology as an academic social scientist rather than as a polemicist. He writes that stigma begins with "rational statistical inference in the presence of limited information," which results in "feedback effects on the behavior of individuals," followed by "a resulting convention." Nor does he follow the leftist agenda slavishly; he is, for example, opposed to reparations to blacks because of slavery.

But at the same time, there can be no denying that Loury's new position will appeal primarily to the legions of black academics, community leaders, school board

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members, journalists, and ordinary citizens who orient their lives around an all-encompassing suspicion of "The Man," and who will treasure *The Anatomy of Racial Inequality* for "telling it like it is."

It is primarily these people who, for over three decades now, have done their best to convince black America that its most urgent task should be to teach whites that black problems are entirely a function of historical legacy and that residual racism does as much, if not more, harm as overt discrimination once did. But this position, which Loury so cogently countered in his earlier work, has produced little but blustery rhetoric. In the real world of America today, black success stories are legion, and for the most part they come about through good old-fashioned hard work and inner strength. They certainly do not have the character of a victory snatched out of the jaws of defeat. For most of these everyday heroes of everyday life, residual white racism is a minor nuisance that they overcome by keeping their eyes on the prize; it is not an omnipresent force that occupies their every waking hour. While the left continues to wait for the redemption of total revolution, most blacks continue to rise through the ranks of American society, thriving *in spite of* black activist ideology, not because of it.

None of this is meant to suggest that blacks ought to adopt a hard-right ideology. Rather, what we need is black intellectuals to chart a coherent and constructive pathway between ideological extremes. That the leftist position alone will not help us seems clear from how little the likes of Jesse Jackson and Maxine Waters have done to improve the lives of the blacks who need it most, not to mention the devastation that open-ended welfare policies have wrought in cities across the nation. Instead, we must combine the ideologies of the right and left to fashion creative solutions to concrete social and cultural problems. The manifest success of welfare reform should serve as a model, since it managed to combine the liberal insistence on a basic economic safety net with the conservative demand that individual initiative be fostered by strict time limits designed to encourage people to enter the work force.

Loury himself claims that his new position represents a moderate, "independent" view. But this is frankly unconvincing. A theory of race fixated on the subtle "stigma" from which blacks are forced to suffer has, inadvertently or not, adopted a core assumption of the ideological left. It has chosen to proclaim the impotence of individuals and emphasize the determinative force of social conditioning. And it has done so while dismissing the most useful arguments on the right for insufficient racial sensitivity.

I sincerely believe that in a hundred years the peculiar obsession of late-twentieth-century American scholars of race with black "stigma" will be seen for the unfortunate and distracting detour that it is. By then black thinkers will, one hopes, have come to see that, while the pigment is not a mere figment, African-Americans possess far more power as individuals than they do as a group fixated on the injustices of the past. Regretfully, Glenn Loury's new book does little to promote this much-needed shift in thinking toward political synthesis. I genuinely hope that in his future projects he might temper his current fixation on historical obstacles to black progress with the considerable wisdom—not to mention the courage—contained in his earlier writings. It should go without saying that few scholars in America are better equipped for the task.

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Glenn C. Loury

In *The Anatomy of Racial Inequality* I aim to do three things: outline a theory of race applicable to the social and historical circumstances of the United States; sketch an account of why racial inequality in our society is so stubbornly persistent; and offer a conceptual framework for the practice of social criticism on race-related issues that might encourage reflection among our political and intellectual elite, and in this way promote social reform. These objectives are subsumed, respectively, in successive chapters of my book entitled "Racial Stereotypes," "Racial Stigma," and "Racial Justice." Jorge Garcia takes issue with me at every step of this program. Although I am convinced that he is wrong and I am right about the points in contention, I am profoundly grateful to Professor Garcia for his close reading of, and intellectually serious engagement with, my text.

Any theory of race, it seems to me, must explain the fact that people take note of and assign significance to superficial markings on the bodies of other human beings—their skin color, hair texture, facial bone structure, and so forth. This practice is virtually universal in human societies. Scientists have conjectured that it has a deep neurological foundation. So this is the point of departure for my analysis. I refer to a society as being "raced" when its members routinely partition the field

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of human subjects whom they encounter in that society into groups, and when this sorting convention is based on the subjects' possession of some cluster of observable bodily marks. This leads to my claim that, at bottom, "race" is all about "embodied social signification."

Let us call this the *social-cognitive* approach to thinking about race. It may be usefully contrasted with an approach derived from the science/art of *biological taxonomy*. There one endeavors to classify human beings on the basis of natural variation in genetic endowments across geographically isolated sub-populations. Such isolation was a feature of the human condition until quite recently (on an evolutionary time scale), and it permitted some independence of biological development within sub-populations that can be thought to have led to the emergence of distinct races. When philosophers such as Jorge Garcia or Anthony Appiah deny the reality of "race" they have in mind this biological-taxonomic notion, and what they deny is that meaningful distinctions among contemporary human subgroups can be derived in this way. Whether they are right or not would appear to be a scientific question.* But, whatever the merits of this dispute, it is important to understand that the validity of racial classification as an exercise in *biological taxonomy* is conceptually distinct from the validity (and relevance) of my concern with racial categorization as an exercise in *social-cognition*.

Moreover, and this too is absolutely critical, to establish the scientific invalidity of racial taxonomy demonstrates neither the *irrationality* nor the *immorality* of adhering to a social convention of racial classification. We can adopt the linguistic convention that when saying, "person A belongs to race X" what we mean is that "person A possesses physical traits which (in a given society, at a fixed point in history, under the conventions of racial classification extant there and then) will cause him to be classified (by a preponderance of those he encounters in that society and/or by himself) as belonging to race X." This is a *pragmatic* judgment on my part, not an a priori logical claim. That is, I hold this view because the social convention of thinking about other people and about ourselves as belonging to different races is such a longstanding and deeply ingrained one in our political culture that it has taken on a life of its own. Thus, for students of the history and political economy of the modern multiracial nation-state like me, the logical exercise of deconstructing racial categories by trying to show that nothing "real" lies behind them is largely beside the point.

This point of view is supported by the theory of "self-confirming stereotypes" that I advance in the book. My point here is a subtle one, and I am not sure that Garcia grasps it. Imagine people who believe that fluctuations of the stock market can be predicted by changes in sunspot activity. They might do so because, as an objective meteorological matter, sunspots correlate with rainfall, which influences crop yields, thus affecting the economy. Or, solar radiation might somehow influence the human psyche so as to alter how people behave in securities markets. These are objective causal links between sunspots and stock prices. They can be likened to grounding one's cognizance of race on the validity of a race-based biological taxonomy. But suppose that no objective links of this kind between sunspots and stock prices exist. Even so, if enough people believe in the connection, monitor conditions on the sun's surface, and act based on how they anticipate security prices will be affected, then a *real* link between these evidently disparate phenomena will have been forged out of the subjective perceptions of stock market participants. That is, belief in the financial relevance of sunspot activity will have been rendered entirely rational.

Similarly, no *objective* racial taxonomy need be valid for the *subjective* use of racial classifications to become warranted. It is enough that influential social actors hold schemes of racial classification in their minds and act on those schemes. Their methods of classification may be mutually inconsistent, and they may be unable to give a cogent justification for adopting their schemes. But once a person knows that others in society will classify him on the basis of certain markers, and should these acts of classification affect his material or psychological well-being, then it will be a rational cognitive stance—not a belief in magic and certainly not a *moral* error—for him to think of himself as being "raced." In turn, that he thinks of himself in this way, and that his societal peers are inclined to classify him similarly, can provide a compelling reason for a newcomer to the society to adopt this ongoing scheme of racial classification. Learning the extant "language" of embodied social signification is a first step toward assimilation of the foreigner, or the newborn, into any "raced" society.

I thus conclude that races, in the social-cognitive sense, may come to exist and be reproduced over the generations in a society, even though there may exist no races in the biological-taxonomic sense. So while I accept Garcia's point that calling attention to the social practice of racial classification cannot resolve a scientific dispute on the existence of races, I continue to insist that, for the purpose of understanding how race operates in the American social hierarchy, my "embodied

* It is worth noting here that a number of distinguished modern scientists disagree with them. Steven Pinker of M.I.T., in his forthcoming book, *The Blank Slate*, stresses that races are not discrete, non-overlapping categories but nevertheless argues that what we perceive as race has some biological reality as a statistical concept. A similar position is adopted by geneticist James Crow and zoologist Ernst Mayr, both Fellows of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, writing separately in the Winter 2002 issue of *Daedalus*.

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social signification" viewpoint is both logically coherent and analytically useful.

I suspect the foregoing will not convince Garcia, and I think I know why. He is an ethicist, keen to move from the cognitive to a normative discourse. He wants to say, I infer from his argument here, that there is something "wrong" with seeing others (or, for that matter, oneself) in racial terms—with preferring to associate with people because of their racial identities, with feeling obligated to co-racialists, and so on. Just as one might think it wrong to punish people (witches) for the crime of being "the devil's handmaiden" when in point of fact no people actually are, so too one might think it wrong to condition one's dealings with others on the basis of "race" when, in point of fact, there are no (biological-taxonomic) "races." If there are no races, then what possible justification can there be for the embrace of racial identity? My view is that the existence of races (in the biological-taxonomic sense) and the ethics of the practice of racial classification are largely distinct problems. What is more, I do not think we can get at the latter problem by interrogating the human heart, one person at a time. It is a mistake, in my view, to judge the propriety of social conventions in terms of whether individuals behave virtuously or viciously when they elect to comply with those conventions. To be taken seriously, an ethical critique of race-based thinking must get beneath (or behind) the cognitive acts of individual persons and investigate the structure of social relations within which those individuals operate.

This brings me to the topic of *racial stigma*—the central innovative concept in my book. Garcia charges that I am unclear about my meaning here, and John McWhorter sees me as reiterating, in a slightly modified form, the tired liberal charge that blacks do not succeed because whites are guilty of moral malfeasance. Both charges are groundless. To reiterate, my basic approach to the problem of racial inequality is *cognitive*, not *normative*. I eschew use of the word "racism" not to avoid sounding like an outdated civil rights leader, but because the word is imprecise. More useful, I think, is my core concept—"biased social cognition." McWhorter certainly, and Garcia to a lesser extent, misunderstand my intent here. *Racial stigma* is not a bludgeon with which I hope to beat "whitey" into political submission. It does not refer to "sinister" thoughts in the heads of white people. Nor is it an invitation to passivity for blacks. Rather, what I am doing with this concept is trying to move from the fact that people take note of racial classification in the course of their interactions with one another to some understanding of how this affects their *perceptions* of the phenomena they observe in the social world around them, and how it shapes their *explanations* of those phenomena.

Given the evident sensitivity of racial discourse, it is perhaps best if I make the point with a nonracial example. So consider gender inequality, disparity in social outcomes for boys and girls, in two different venues—schools and jails. Suppose that, when compared to girls, boys are overrepresented among those doing well in math and science in the schools, and also among those doing poorly in society at large by ending up in jail. There is some evidence to support both suppositions, but only the first is widely perceived to be a problem for public policy. Why? My answer is that it offends our basic intuition about the propriety of underlying social processes that boys and girls do differentially well in the technical curriculum. Although we may not be able to put our fingers on exactly why this outcome occurs, we instinctively know that it is not right. In the face of the disparity we are inclined to interrogate our institutions—to search the record of our social practice and examine myriad possibilities in order to see where things might have gone wrong. Our baseline expectation is that equality should prevail here. Our moral sensibility is offended when it does not. And so, an impetus to reform is spurred. We cannot easily envision a wholly legitimate sequence of events that would produce the disparity, so we set ourselves the task of solving a problem.

Gender disparity in rates of imprisonment, on the other hand, occasions no such disquiet. This is because, tacitly if not explicitly, we are "gender essentialists." That is, we think boys and girls are different in some ways relevant to explaining the disparity—different either in their biological natures, or in their deeply ingrained socializations. (Note that the essentialism with which I am concerned need not be based solely or even mainly in biology. It can be grounded in [possibly false] beliefs about profound cultural difference as well.) As gender essentialists, our intuitions are not offended by the fact of vastly higher rates of imprisonment among males than females. We seldom ask any deeper questions about why this disparity has come about. And so we see no problem.

Now, we may be right or wrong to act as we do in these gender disparity matters. My point is simply that the bare facts of gender disparity do not, in themselves, suggest any course of action. To act, we must marry the facts to some model of social causation. This model need not be explicit in our minds. It can and usually will lurk beneath the surface of our conscious reflections. Still, it is the facts *plus* the model that lead us to perceive, or not perceive, a given circumstance as indicative of some as yet undiagnosed failing in our social interactions. This kind of reflection on the deeper structure of our social-cognitive processes as they bear on the issues of racial disparity is what I had hoped to encourage with my discussion of "biased social cognition." And the role

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of race in such processes is what I am alluding to when I talk about "racial stigma."

To show how the argument goes, I would like to invoke a thought experiment not unlike the ones I analyze at length in my book. For some reason, McWhorter thinks that these are "anecdotes," and he accuses me of playing fast and loose with the facts. He grossly misunderstands me. Hypotheticals and counterfactuals are commonplace in both philosophy and social theory; they convey general conceptual distinctions in the context of a larger analytical development. That is how I use them in my book.

So, imagine that an observer (correctly) takes note of the fact that, on average and all else being equal, commercial loans to blacks pose a greater risk of default, or that black residential neighborhoods are more likely to decline. This may lead the observer to withhold credit from blacks, or to move away from any neighborhood when more than a few blacks move into it. But what if race conveys this information only because, when a great number of observers expect it to do so and act on that expectation, the result (through some possibly complex chain of social causation) confirms their beliefs? Perhaps blacks default more often precisely because they have trouble getting further extensions of credit in the face of a crisis. Or perhaps nonblack residents panic at the arrival of a few blacks, selling their homes too quickly and below the market value to lower-income (black) buyers, and it is this process that ends up promoting neighborhood decline.

If under such circumstances observers were to attribute racially disparate behaviors to deeply ingrained (biological or cultural) limitations of African-Americans—thinking, say, that blacks do not repay their loans or take care of their property because, for whatever reasons, they are just less responsible people on average—then these observers might well be mistaken. But because their supposition about blacks is supported by hard evidence, they might well persist in the error.* Such an error, persisted in, would be of great *political* moment, because if one attributes an endogenous difference (a difference produced within a system of interactions) to an exogenous cause (a cause located outside that system), then one is unlikely to see any need for systemic reform. This distinction between *endogenous* and *exogenous* sources of social causation, I am arguing, is the key to understanding the difference in our reformist intuitions about gender inequalities in schools and in jails. That is, because we think the disparity in school outcomes stems from endogenous sources, while the disparity of jail outcomes is tacitly attributed in most of our "causal models" to exogenous sources, we respond to the disparities in different ways.

So when I talk about "racial stigma" and employ an apparently loaded phrase like "biased social cognition," I do so because these terms allow us to see how the disadvantageous position of a racially defined population subgroup can be the product of a system of social interactions and not some quality intrinsic to the group. I reiterate that it hardly matters whether those intrinsic qualities *mistakenly* seen as the source of a group's lowly status are biological or cultural.† What matters, I argue, is that something has gone wrong if observers fail to see *systemic, endogenous* interactions that lead to bad social outcomes for blacks, and instead attribute those results to *exogenous* factors taken as internal to the group in question. My contention—and neither Garcia nor McWhorter offers argument or evidence to refute it—is that in American society, when the group in question is blacks, the risk of this kind of causal misattribution is especially great.

I believe the disparate impact of the enforcement of anti-drug laws offers a telling illustration of the value in this way of thinking. Garcia disagrees. The sellers of drugs are more deeply involved in serious crime than are buyers, he says, and anyone with a moral sense knows that serious criminals deserve incarceration. Without necessarily disputing either of these claims, here is what I actually believe on this question: there can be no drug market without sellers *and* buyers. (Just so, there would be no street prostitution without hookers and johns.) Typically, those on the selling side of such markets are more deeply involved in crime and disproportionately drawn from the bottom rungs of society. When we entertain an alternative response to the social

* Oddly, Garcia chastises me for introducing the possibility through these thought experiments that there might be truth to stereotypical beliefs such as "black neighborhoods tend to decline." He thinks the relevant analysis of racial stereotypes must expose the lack of virtue of those who persist in holding false generalizations about some group. But this is a willful misreading, one which I find difficult to understand since I write explicitly in my book (on page 24) that, while the common parlance definition of "stereotype" has a connotation of unreasonableness, a "stereotype being a false or too simplistic surmise about some group: 'blacks are lazy,' 'Jews are cunning,' and so on, this crude overgeneralizing behavior . . . is not my subject. Rather, my model of stereotypes is designed to show the limited sense in which even 'reasonable' generalizations, those for which ample supporting evidence can be found, are fully 'rational.' I argue that such generalizations often represent instances of what I will refer to as 'biased social cognition.'" Surely there is nothing shocking about this, nor can there be any doubt as to the relevance of my analysis of stereotypes (in the sense that I use the term) for understanding the problem of persistent racial inequality.

† Thus, Garcia's distinction in this regard—between Charles Murray (who, he says, may be an essentialist, since Murray thinks blacks are intellectually inferior for genetic reasons), and Dinesh D'Souza (who, he says, couldn't possibly be an essentialist, since he simply thinks that blacks are uncivilized)—is largely beside the point.

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malady reflected in drug use (or in street prostitution), we must weight the costs likely to be imposed upon the people involved. Our tacit models of social causation will play a role in this process of evaluation. To ruin a college student's life because of a drug buy, or a businessman's reputation because of a pick-up in the red light district, may strike us as far more costly than to send a young thug to Riker's Island, or to put a floozy in the slammer.

One consequence of racial stigma, I suggest, is that because those bearing the brunt of the cost of our punitive response to the broad social malady of drug usage are disproportionately black, our society is less impelled to examine possible bias in this area of policy, and to consider reform. I could be wrong about this, but the speculation is certainly not implausible. How "serious" a given crime is seen to be in the minds of those who through their votes indirectly determine our policies, and how "deserved" the punishment for a given infraction, can depend on the racial identities of the parties involved. This, I am holding, is human nature. There need be nothing "sinister" in any of it. But if we want to analyze what is going on around us, and not merely moralize about it, we will want to take such possibilities seriously.

That is what I see myself as doing. I use the theory of biased social cognition that I have just sketched to argue that durable racial inequality can best be understood as the outgrowth of a series of "vicious circles of cumulative causation." Tacit association of "blackness" with "unworthiness" in the American public's imagination affects cognitive processes and promotes essentialist causal misattributions. Confronted by the facts of racially disparate achievement, the racially disproportionate transgression of legal strictures, and racially unequal development of productive potential, observers will have difficulty identifying with the plight of a group of people whom they (mistakenly) think are simply "reaping what they have sown." So there will be little public support for egalitarian policies benefiting a stigmatized racial group. This, in turn, encourages the reproduction through time of racial inequality because, absent some policies of this sort, the low social conditions of many blacks persist, the negative social meanings ascribed to blackness are thereby reinforced, and so the racially biased social-cognitive processes are reproduced, completing the circle.

What is more, I argue that this situation constitutes a gross historical injustice in American society. Again, Garcia disagrees. He thinks we act legitimately to reduce racial equality only when we are moved by a desire to promote comity and community, but not when we are pursuing "racial justice." He praises me for my opposition to slavery reparations, but takes me to task for seeing racial inequalities on the scale so evident in contemporary American life as a problem of justice. Yet these two positions are very closely linked. In my view, present racial inequality is a problem of justice because it has its root in past unjust acts that were perpetrated on the basis of race. I see past racial injustice as establishing a general presumption against indifference to present racial inequality.

To see why this matters, suppose it could be shown that a posture of official public indifference to racial inequality would *enhance* our comity and community. (So, it would seem, many advocates of a "color-blind" America believe.) Even if this were the case, I would still urge that some efforts to reduce racial inequality would be warranted. However, those efforts should not be conceived in terms of "correcting" or "balancing" for historical violation. This is what leads me to reject reparations. In my view, although the *quantitative* attribution of causal weight to distant historical events required by reparations advocacy is not workable, one can still support *qualitative* claims.

Reparations advocates conceive the problem of our morally problematic racial history in *compensatory* terms. By contrast, I see the problem in *interpretative* terms. That is, I seek public recognition of the severity, and (crucially) the contemporary relevance, of what has transpired. The goal is to encourage a common basis of historical memory—a common narrative—through which the past racial injury and its continuing significance can enter into current policy discourse. What is required for racial justice, as I conceive it, is a commitment on the part of the public, the political elite, the opinion-shaping media, and so on to take responsibility for the plight of the urban black poor, and to understand this troubling circumstance as having emerged out of an ethically indefensible past. Such a commitment should, in my view, be open-ended and not contingent on demonstrating any specific lines of causality. Again, I could be wrong about this, though neither Garcia nor McWhorter gives argument or evidence to disabuse me of this view. And should a critic agree with my judgment here but prefer not to use the word "justice" in reference to it, that would be a matter of little consequence.

I turn now from the argument of my book to a consideration of the larger political context into which my argument has been injected. John McWhorter thinks *The Anatomy of Racial Inequality* marks a "coming out" for me as some kind of leftist after my many years of faithful service on the conservative side of this question—the side that he favors. This, I fear, is a gross mischaracterization. This book is an exercise in social theory, not in polemics, and anyone who spends five minutes perusing it will see as much. My goal with this exercise has been to understand something of how race, racial identity, and racial classification work in the social life of this nation. Any such endeavor self-consciously undertaken as an

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expression of political ideology is bound to fail. There are literatures in economics, sociology, and social psychology to which I hope to contribute with this work. I cannot be sure I have succeeded—this is up to my scholarly peers to decide. But the one thing I am certain of is that in the writing of this book I have had no political agenda.

McWhorter perceives a harrowing psychodrama in which the "good" (conservative) Loury becomes "possessed" by some "bad" (left-leaning author of this book) Loury. If what the Loury writing in 2002 has to say about racial inequality differs from the views of Loury writing in 1985, McWhorter can envision only two explanations: either the latter-day Loury is an opportunist shifting his views to curry favor and advance his career; or, he is an emotional wreck, exhausted from doing battle with the civil rights establishment. McWhorter has the temerity, the audacity, to write: "By the late 1990s, a series of personal crises began to lead Loury to question his earlier views."

How on earth would he (or anyone, for that matter) know that, and what is such uninformed psychological speculation doing in a book review? I very much regret that John McWhorter has drawn me into such an ad hominem discussion, in the pages of a journal of ideas on whose editorial advisory board I have served for nearly a decade, but so be it. The "crises" to which he refers occurred in the 1980s, fifteen years before the publication of this book, and many years before I left the conservative camp. I have been speaking publicly and writing critically on race-related matters since 1982. If the heat of controversy was going to prove too much for me, why didn't this happen in the early 1980s when I aligned myself with the Reagan Administration, or in the late 1980s when I was publicly humiliated by "personal crises," or in the early 1990s when a centrist Democratic administration might have opened its doors to me? In short, McWhorter's narrative is an irrelevant piece of fiction that tells the reader a good deal more about him (the happy warrior, hacking away on the frontlines of the Kulturkampf), and about the movement of which he is now a part, than it tells about me.

Moving along, what are we to make of his reaction to my argument? In a word, it lacks cogency. Item: I do *not* argue that people view others in society through the lens of the scientific paradigms made famous by Thomas Kuhn. Rather, I hold that people adopt modes of learning about the underlying causes of social outcomes that, in their lack of a fully rational cognitive foundation, may be usefully likened to what Kuhn proposed about the way scientific communities assimilate new theories. Item: I do *not* say that people form their beliefs based on their desire to belong to one community or another. Rather, I hypothesize that if we are to understand how people acquire the mechanisms of symbolic expression peculiar to the communities in which they are embedded we must consider the meaning of their relations with others in those communities. Item: I do *not* suggest that the tendency toward social generalization leads blacks to suffer from "reward bias." To the contrary, I explicitly state that such bias is no longer a major factor in accounting for black disadvantage.* On the evidence at hand, I am forced to conclude that McWhorter does not comprehend the argument of my book.

Despite these misunderstandings, he thinks my theory "solid," and perhaps I should be thankful for small favors. But the honeymoon is short-lived! He turns sour on Chapter Three, where I give racial stigma a central role in my thinking, thereby promoting the idea, he thinks, that "history is destiny" for black people. But this is just more confusion. It is an empirical question answerable by social science as to whether or not the racial stigma that I have discussed here is an important impediment to blacks' social advancement. In contrast, it is a moral and philosophical question—even an existential/spiritual matter—answerable by reference to the values and traditions of black American people as to whether this or any other obstacle we might encounter along life's path should be seen as fundamentally determining our destinies. An analysis of the social-structural factors impeding black progress need not be a counsel of passivity. To the contrary, such an analysis is the essential first step in any program of rational action.

McWhorter accuses me of quietly endorsing leftist positions because he imagines some leftists may agree with what I have written. He actually thinks this is a reason to reject my argument. Continuing in this vein, he tars me with the brush of association with the hated Jesse Jackson (why not up the ante and make it Al Sharpton?) simply because I used a phrase with a pithy rhyme, as Jackson is wont to do. He thinks that I have forgotten what I used to know about the history of black people, and particularly about the origins of the underclass. And what is this forgotten truth? It is that the tragic con-

* McWhorter gets this part of my argument exactly backwards. According to him, I think *development bias* is no longer a problem for blacks, and believe a stigma-induced *reward bias* now limits black life-chances. Has he read the book? Here is what I write there: "Another name for the reward bias argument is discrimination. . . . I am not enthusiastic about this concept; I argue here that it should be . . . dislodged from its current prominent place in the conceptual discourse on racial inequality in American life [because of] . . . my conviction that racial discrimination, as an analytical category, cannot reach the problem of development bias. . . . And yet I see the development bias argument as the more promising one . . . for two reasons. In the first place, it explains the extent and durability of current racial inequality more effectively. But more important, the dilemmas of public morality created by racial inequality in the United States . . . can be fully illuminated *only when the development bias problem is placed at center stage.*" (Pages 93-94, emphasis added.)

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ditions in today's ghettos are "due less to slavery's legacy than to the rise of the New Left in the 1960s."

I most certainly have not "forgotten" this purported truth about black American history. I never knew any such thing, for the good and sufficient reason that it is not true. Black power ideology led to an oppositional culture in the ghettos, McWhorter says. Guilt-ridden whites gave the black poor free handouts with AFDC programs that paid them to have children and lured them into dependency. Racial preferences kept black students from ever learning what serious effort entails. Concerning this cartoon version of American social history, my reaction is best captured in the phrase made famous by Howard Beale, the "mad prophet of the airwaves" in the film *Network*: "I'm mad as hell, and I'm not going to take it any more!"

Indeed, it was this kind of mindless sloganeering about the serious problems afflicting poor black people that drove me from the conservative ranks in the first place, in defense of my own intellectual integrity. Missing from McWhorter's underclass morality tale are a few factors that most social historians rightly find to be significant: deindustrialization in the "rust belt" cities; a huge, relatively low-skilled immigration quickening competition at the labor market's bottom rungs; fierce resistance by working-class whites to housing and school integration for decades after segregation had been legally proscribed; technological innovations such as the birth control pill, which helped to alter sexual mores across the class structure, and crack cocaine, which, along with the easy availability of guns, changed life in inner cities across America; the demolishing of low-rent housing through slum clearance and replacement of these units with massive high-rise public housing projects sited exclusively in black residential districts. One could go on in this vein, but this should suffice to make my point: he who thinks the underclass is the product of a bunch of 1960's moral relativists knows not what he is talking about.

Were McWhorter to take a glance at the wealth of historical scholarship on the roots of social decay in American cities (Tom Sugrue's prize-winning study of Detroit in the quarter century after World War II, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis*, is a good place to start), he would discover just how superficial and tendentious his characterization appears. The greatest of the "black power ideologues" was the Nation of Islam's Malcolm X—a puritan on cultural matters. If the family values, work ethic, and concern with self-improvement on display at the 1995 Million Man March give any indication of what an "oppositional culture" can produce, then such "opposition" can hardly explain poor social performance among black people. Real welfare payments fell continually for a quarter century between 1970 and the advent of welfare reform, even as the size of the ghetto underclass constantly grew. If paying women to have babies led to black welfare dependency, then did they elect to increase their "supply of babies" as the pay rate fell? Race preferences at the college level affected a minuscule fraction of black students until well into the 1980s, and even now reach only a minority (since three-fifths of American colleges and universities admit all who apply and meet minimal qualifications). How, then, could this set of policies account for the behavior of millions of black students?

Having gotten that off my chest, let me now make a confession. I think I know where the animus in McWhorter's review is coming from, and I admit that I am partly to blame. He, along with many of my former comrades, is disappointed in and confused about my current position, and for good reason: I seem now to be contradicting some of the most powerful arguments that I advanced against racial liberalism in the past. Thus, ten years ago, in the pages of this very journal, I wrote the following:

> It is time to recognize that further progress toward the attainment of equality for black Americans, broadly and correctly understood, depends most crucially at this juncture on the acknowledgment and rectification of the dysfunctional behaviors which plague black communities, and which so offend and threaten others. Recognize this, and much else will follow. It is more important to address this matter effectively than it is to agitate for additional rights. Indeed, success in such agitation has become contingent upon effective reform efforts mounted from within the black community. . . .
>
> The [key] point . . . is [that] progress such as this must be earned, it cannot be demanded. . . . When the effect of past oppression is to leave a people in a diminished state, the attainment of true equality with the former oppressor cannot depend on his generosity, but must ultimately derive from an elevation of their selves above the state of diminishment. It is of no moment that historic wrongs may have caused current deprivation, for justice is not the issue here. The issues are dignity, respect, and self-respect—all of which are preconditions for true equality between any peoples. The classic interplay between the aggrieved black and the guilty white, in which the former demands and the latter conveys recognition of historic injustice, is not an exchange among equals. Neither, one suspects, is it a stable exchange. Eventually it may shade into something else, something less noble—into patronage, into a situation where

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> the guilty one comes to have contempt for the claimant, and the claimant comes to feel shame, and its natural accompaniment, rage, at his impotence. ("Two Paths to Black Power," FT, October 1992)

How, I imagine McWhorter, Garcia, and a great many others must be asking, can the man who wrote those words make *racial stigma* the central organizing principle of his "anatomy of racial inequality"? This is neither the time nor the place for me to fully address that question, but I can offer this partial reply. It is not inconsistent to hold that black parents are responsible for the values embraced by their children and simultaneously to hold that the nation also bears some responsibility for the suffering of the ghetto poor. Nor is it a contradiction to assert, at one and the same time, that profound behavioral problems afflict many black communities and that these maladies are no alien imposition on an otherwise pristine Euro-American canvas, but instead arise from economic and political structures indigenous to American society. Both can be true. And if both are true, the question becomes one of emphasis. While my emphasis has definitely changed, I have not repudiated my earlier claims.

The deeper issue, though, is the difficulty of coherently and effectively voicing both truths when one endeavors to practice social criticism in a "multiple audience" context. Whenever a black critic advances an argument for any kind of reform, he faces two audiences—a communal one and a civic one. The passage from 1992 quoted above was an exercise in social criticism directed, ironically, at black American intellectual and political leaders. (This is ironic because the piece was surely better known among and more widely cited by whites.) And my recently published book is an exercise in social criticism directed at the broad American elite as a whole. In 1992 I was preoccupied with the questions of dignity and self-respect for black people. These are inherently communal questions, which is not to say that only blacks can speak of such matters, or that blacks must speak only among themselves about them. But it is to acknowledge that, for the most part, they are matters where blacks must take the lead in defining the goals and managing the processes of moving toward them. But questions of social justice and fair opportunity are the fit subjects of a broader public discourse. And where the historical echoes of the racial subordination of African Americans continue to bear on such questions, we must not shrink from saying so.

The ultimate difficulty here is that, while self-development is an existential necessity for blacks as an ethnic community, its advocacy by black social critics in the larger civic discourse often undercuts the pursuit of racial justice, because people are authorized to see a problem of *black culture* instead of a problem of *racial justice*, when in fact both problems are there. (And, conversely, advocacy for racial justice can undercut communal reform by leading blacks to not see the culture problem.) This difficulty is reflected in the dual meaning of "we" implicit in the signature question I raise in my book: "What manner of people are *we* who accept such degradation in our midst?" There are two implied imperatives—getting the "cultural trains to run on time" in black communities, and addressing the structural legacy of generations of racial oppression—and they rest on very different grounds. Whereas the first draws on ties of blood, shared history, and common faith, the second endeavors to achieve an integration of the most wretched, despised, and feared of our fellows along with the rest of us into a single political community of mutual concern.

This problem is closely related to the age-old conundrum of reconciling individual and social responsibilities. We humans, while undertaking our life projects, find ourselves constrained by social and cultural influences beyond our control. Yet if we are to live effective and dignified lives, we must behave as if we can indeed determine our fates. Similarly, black Americans are constrained by the residual effects of an ugly history of racism. Yet seizing what the iconic black conservative Booker T. Washington once called "freedom in the larger and higher sense" requires that blacks accept responsibility for our own fate even though the effects of this immoral past remain with us. But our doing so cannot be allowed to excuse the nation from acknowledging a basic moral truth—one that transcends politics—which is that the citizens of this republic bear a responsibility to be actively engaged in changing the structures that constrain the black poor, so that they can more effectively exercise their inherent and morally required capacity to choose.

So, I was on a moral crusade in 1992. I am on a rather different quest now, but they are complementary, not contradictory, endeavors. Then I was sure that the biggest obstacle to incorporating the ghetto poor into the commonwealth was that their leaders had the wrong ideas. Now I think that was a mistake and I am laboring to correct the error. (Of course, some of these leaders still have bad ideas, but they are not alone in this.) As I say in the conclusion of my book, the role of a responsible black public intellectual today is to keep in play an awareness of the need for both communal and civic reforms, finding a way to make progress in either sphere complement that in the other.

Still, playing that role credibly is not easy. The larger currents of American public life inhibit nuance in discourse about race and social policy (by commentators of all races). Moreover, there is something inevitably

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emblematic about the role that a prominent black intellectual like myself plays in such discussions.* This role of "tacit testifying" that black dissenters inevitably play when they publicly break ranks from their co-racialists accounts for why we tend to be so easily pigeonholed in, and are so willing to remain confined to, one ideological camp or the other. And it also helps to explain why when we change our minds, many people—liberals and conservatives alike—think they smell a rat. They are wrong.

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* Consider how the race of the author has contributed to the credibility of the arguments in books like McWhorter's *Losing the Race: Self-Sabotage in Black America* and Randall Kennedy's recent *Nigger: The Strange Career of a Troublesome Word*. The importance of the authors' race in these cases is due not so much to the possibility that he has access to inside information. Rather, the key point is that the argument's legitimacy, not its accuracy, can be enhanced by an author's race. ("Even some blacks can see that . . . ") But legitimacy depends on what a reader can safely assume about an author's motives. As a result, social criticism on race-related topics by black writers inescapably entails an ad hominem element.

Dear Gentle Soul

Dear gentle soul, who has, too soon, departed
this life, so discontent: please rest, my dear,
forever in heaven, while I, remaining here,
must live alone, in pain, and broken-hearted.
Within your ethereal state, so high above,
if you are allowed to recall your life below,
remember what you saw, not long ago,
within my eyes, my perfect ardent love.
And if my pain has earned me some relief,
some dispensation, I wonder if you might
in prayer ask God, who took away your brief
young life, if He would soon, this very night,
give me death, and end my helpless grief,
as swiftly as He took you from my sight.

Luís de Camões (1524/25-1580)
Translated from the Portuguese by William Baer

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Books In Review

Problems or Puzzles?

Wittgenstein's Poker: The Story of a Ten-Minute Argument Between Two Great Philosophers. By David Edmonds and John Eidinow. *Ecco. 340 pp. $24.*

***Reviewed by* Edward T. Oakes**

The German word for "courage," *Mut,* is verbal cousin to the English word "mood." But unlike English, German can play variations on that root by attaching prefixes to specify the mood. For example, *Anmut* means "charm" and *Hochmut* "arrogance." That esoteric factoid from the world of etymology came to mind while reading *Wittgenstein's Poker,* for in effect the authors, both journalists for the BBC, have written a most charming book about a brief ten-minute contretemps (their only encounter) between two men, Ludwig Wittgenstein and Karl Popper, who will strike most readers as either admirably courageous or intolerably arrogant (or both).

Of their arrogance there can be no doubt. As the authors write, "Whatever the social and cultural differences between Wittgenstein and Popper, one similarity of character made it inevitable that [the audience at their debate] would see a raging confrontation: their sheer awfulness to others in discussion and debate." Popper was especially unyielding in public argument. He would even occasionally demand that his graduate assistants ask prepared questions at his lectures, rather as if he were speaking at a plenary session of the Moscow Communist Party, and would then berate them in public if the wording of their questions strayed from their prepared text or, worse, so much as hinted at any inadequacy in his views. This obnoxious habit prompted one wag to claim that Popper's most famous book, *The Open Society and Its Enemies,* should instead have borne the title *The Open Society by One of Its Enemies.* As for Wittgenstein, he left one woman in tears (his hostess at a weekend outing no less) when she exclaimed, "What a beautiful tree that is!" This quite ordinary bit of small talk prompted him to turn on her and harshly demand what she could possibly have meant by such a vapid remark.

But both men no doubt also displayed courage, and often. Wittgenstein fought for the Austro-Hungarian Empire in World War I and proved brave to the point of foolhardiness. So courageous was he in one battle that he would have won a medal for heroism except for the fact that Austria lost that particular battle, and the Hapsburgs, in their typically ham-fisted, Ruritanian way, only gave out medals when the army as a whole was victorious. And Popper never tempered his views in public lectures even when it would have done his career some good, so that after he fled Hitler's post-*Anschluss* Austria he had to wander about like the *Flying Dutchman* until finally settling in the London School of Economics well after the war.

Despite these similarities, what one most notices in this pleasantly written book is their differences, especially their different—indeed incompatible—conceptions of philosophy. For Popper, philosophy was supposed to solve real problems, both political and scientific, and for that reason it cannot be accidental that the former Conservative Prime Minister of Great Britain, Margaret Thatcher, and the former Social Democrat Chancellor of Germany, Helmut Schmidt, both called Popper their favorite philosopher. As for scientists, most of them manage to get along quite well, thank you, without the ministrations of philosophy, but those who take an avocational interest in its issues also have only the highest praise for Popper.

Wittgenstein, on the other hand, considered philosophy to be little more than a matter of solving "puzzles," as he called them, generated solely by the tricks that grammar plays on logic. Any other approach was for him "bad philosophy." As he once said, in his typically witty and aphoristic way, "Bad philosophers are like slum landlords. It's my job to put them out of business." Not surprisingly, Wittgenstein is one of the most popular philosophers among other philosophers, who rather seem to enjoy trying to put each other—especially members of rival schools—out of business. But his influence on practicing politicians or scientists, who presumably prefer working on crosswords when in the puzzle-solving mood, is next to nonexistent.

Although both grew up in a Jewish section of Vienna and both hovered around the outer penumbra of the so-called "Vienna Circle" (a group of local, mostly Austrian philosophers who founded the school of Logical Positivism), Popper and Wittgenstein never actually met until a fateful debate before the Moral Sciences Club at Cambridge University on October 25, 1946. As it happened, the debate was precisely on the topic that most divided the two men: whether philosophy was meant to deal with Popperian problems or Wittgensteinian puzzles. But Popper had no sooner begun to speak than Wittgenstein grabbed a fireplace poker and began brandishing it about—according to some threateningly, according to others simply to gesticulate. Here accounts really begin to differ, for at this point Wittgenstein either did or did not storm out before Popper—when asked to name a moral rule—

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either did or did not get off the clever rejoinder, "Not to threaten visiting lecturers with pokers."

Nobody present at the time, it seems, can give an agreed-upon account of that evening—any more than philosophy has ever resolved the issue of its true mission, which seems to be the point of the book. Take, for example, Popper's famous "falsifiability principle," his counterproposal to the "verification principle" of the logical positivists. According to the latter school, a theory counts as true if the accumulation of verifiable evidence tells in its favor. But of course, that begs the question not only of what counts as evidence but perhaps even more crucially of how long that evidence needs to continue to tell in favor of the theory. How much evidence must one require for a theory to be taken as true? If one takes the verification principle seriously, one must insist on an infinite range of evidence, covering all cases. As Bertrand Russell put it in an amusing example: "The man who has fed the chicken every day throughout its life at last wrings its neck instead, showing that more refined views as to the uniformity of nature would have been useful to the chicken."

Thus for Popper (as for David Hume before him) a scientific theory could *never* be proved conclusively true; at best it could be held as provisionally true, pending further inquiry. If science really wants a more serviceable theory, then for Popper one must devise one that can be falsified, not verified, by evidence refuting, not supporting, it—just as the benevolence of the farmer toward the chicken was refuted on the day the chicken was served up in that evening's soup.

BUT HOW MIGHT THAT apply to the differing versions of the debate on the evening of October 25, 1946? *Wittgenstein's Poker* includes as an appendix a 1998 debate in the Letters column of the *Times Literary Supplement*, during which most of the surviving attendees of that now notorious ten-minute debate discussed the event. Not only are these accounts by and large contradictory to each other, there really is no way at this juncture, over a half century later, to falsify them, at least short of holding a mock trial in a moot courtroom, with all surviving witnesses subpoenaed under penalty of oath.

But surely this sort of dispute is a regular feature of all eyewitness accounts of long-past (and even recent) events and, a fortiori, of all history. Must history therefore be ruled "unscientific" in all its forms and genres because its statements are difficult, and at times even impossible, to refute? For example, one recent theory holds that the Roman Empire declined and fell not because of Christianity, as Edward Gibbon maintained (or at least implied), but because the Romans invented lead piping to bring water into cities from their fancy new aqueducts, which, in turn, produced lead poisoning and sterility. How would one ever begin to refute either view under Popperian rules of evidence, or even establish their incompatibility?

Consider also Popper's current influence. As the authors rightly point out, "His name is fading, if not forgotten." Partly, this represents merely the penalty of success: what needed saying in 1946 at the outset of the Cold War has now become the received wisdom since the collapse of the Soviet Union (although the authors mention that as late as the year 2000 a Chinese academic, Liu Jumning, was evicted from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences after delivering a lecture on *The Open Society*; and, Lord knows, the House of Islam could certainly use its own native-born Popper).

But Popper is not just the victim of his own success, but of Wittgenstein's as well. By a great irony, universities swept away by postmodern trends have also largely forgotten the pre-

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science of Popper's ringing defense of the Open Society, so that (partly under the influence of Wittgenstein's theory of language games and of his notion of meaning as determined by social usage, not "things in themselves") such philosophers of science as Paul Feyerabend and Thomas Kuhn have argued that scientific theories are not as humble as Popper would lead us to believe. They are rather paradigmatic impositions by the hegemonic or pragmatic intellect. As Wittgenstein himself put it: "If I have exhausted the justification, I have reached bedrock and my spade is turned. Then I am inclined to say, 'This is simply what I do.'" But when that point is reached—when, that is, action alone and not argument can justify itself—then mutually conflicting actions can obviously be tested only against the power behind each actor.

In this sense at least, Wittgenstein won the debate, for now everything looks like either pragmatic expediency ("this is simply what I do") or hegemonic Will to Power. As to philosophy itself, it has very little of the public presence that Popper had given it. By and large, puzzles govern topics for debate, not problems, or at least not the problems that might merit the attention of, let alone have any influence on, practicing politicians or scientists.

Perhaps this is why the authors conclude their generally cheerful and bemused account of these two high-strung geniuses on a certain elegiac note: "Tolerance, relativism, the postmodern refusal to commit, the cultural triumph of uncertainty—all these rule out a repeat of the pyrotechnics of [that evening]. Perhaps, too, there is currently so much specialization, and so many movements and fissures within higher education, that the important questions have been lost." In other words, it would seem that not only do Communist China and the House of Islam need another Popper. So, too, does the world of higher education in the West.

Divine Ambiguity

Leonardo's Incessant Last Supper. By Leo Steinberg. *Zone. 317 pp. $43.*

***Reviewed by* Gregory Wolfe**

Within three years of its completion, Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper* began to flake and fade. The artist had staked his masterpiece, which he spent over two years painting, on a technical gamble, and lost. Always the inventor, Leonardo had come up with the novel idea of applying oil paint to dry plaster on the refectory wall of the Monastery of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan. Humidity, candle smoke, and a series of well-intentioned but disastrous early "restorations" have turned the *Cenacolo* into a ruin, a ghostly memory of itself.

But the elusiveness of *The Last Supper* is much more than a factor of its physical deterioration and the succession of controversial attempts to restore and preserve it. From the very beginning, the painting has exercised a profound and mysterious power over its viewers, evoking both attraction and repulsion, devotion and disgust. Many of the work's most fervent admirers have felt the need to edit, emend, or otherwise rationalize the parts of the composition that troubled or puzzled them. In one of the more choice ironies of cultural history, some of *The Last Supper*'s most brilliant advocates, including Goethe, ended up basing their interpretations on reproductions that differed in crucial ways from the original.

Something else stands between us and our ability to gain a fresh appreciation of Leonardo's vision—the sheer cultural ubiquity of the painting. How to see through the seemingly endless layers of interpretations, allusions, and parodies that have settled over the original? The *Cenacolo* has an iconic quality about it that spawns innumerable copies, a process that continues unabated in our time. Near the end of

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his life, Andy Warhol became obsessed with the painting, making it the basis for dozens of his own works—excerpting details from it, covering it with pink paint, camouflage coloring, and corporate logos. A famous *New Yorker* cartoon reproduces the painting and provides Christ with a caption: "Separate checks." From refrigerator magnets to billboards, the *Cenacolo* is everywhere.

So, it may reasonably be asked: Is there anything left to see or say? Leo Steinberg, professor emeritus of art at the University of Pennsylvania, asks these questions at the outset of *Leonardo's Incessant Last Supper*. The ambiguity of the title, and the photograph of the painting on a New Jersey billboard on the dust jacket, might lead the casual bookstore browser to believe that Steinberg's answers are ironic and deconstructive, an elaborate way of saying that there is nothing left in the work, that it is nothing more than a palimpsest on which diverse cultures and ideologies inscribe their prejudices and preoccupations.

But the casual browser would be wrong. By the end of Steinberg's book, it is clear that *The Last Supper* is not only a towering masterpiece—he calls it "the most thought-out picture in Western art"—but perhaps the most misinterpreted work in the canon. It may seem odd to describe a work of art history, laden with footnotes and no less than six appendices, as rousing, but that is the only word that seems to do justice to the exuberance and incisiveness of Steinberg's prose.

Born in Moscow in 1920, Leo Steinberg has long been known for the vigor and vividness of his scholarship, which has been devoted to explicating the art of both the Renaissance and the twentieth century. His best-known book, *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and in Modern Oblivion*, argues that centuries of censorship and denial have kept a series of classic artworks out of sight, and hence out of mind. These Renaissance paintings depict Christ's genitalia, particularly in works that represent his infancy and the immediate aftermath of the crucifixion (depositions and pietás). According to Steinberg, Renaissance artists understood Christ's circumcision as a shedding of blood that proleptically alludes to his sacrificial death on the cross, and his virginity as "potency under check." Steinberg demonstrates that these renderings of Christ's sexuality were, to the Renaissance artists who created them, the pictorial equivalents of the doctrine of the Incarnation, reminders

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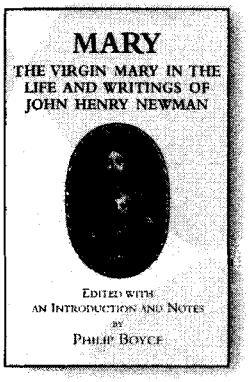

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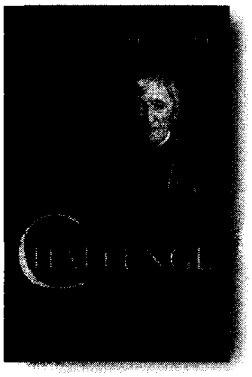

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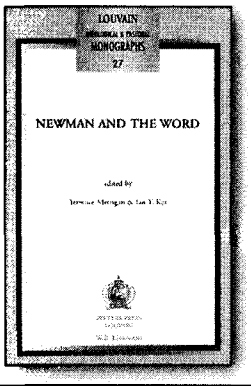

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that the Word of God had indeed become flesh and shared our human condition.

Steinberg's understanding of incarnational theology and its impact on Renaissance art also undergirds *Leonardo's Incessant Last Supper*. The prevailing interpretation of the painting, he notes, was established soon after its completion. According to this view, Leonardo has chosen to focus on the moment when Christ says that "one of you will betray me." The disposition of the figures in the painting, then, reflects the diverse range of psychological reactions to Christ's pronouncement, from astonishment and fear to outrage and denial. Leonardo's genius thus lies in his verisimilitude, psychological realism triumphing over theological symbolism. In this vein the painting was typically praised as being "unambiguous and clear," its secularism reflected not merely in its careful attention to emotional states but in the scientific perfection of its one-point perspective. As Steinberg shows, this interpretation appealed equally to Enlightenment, Romantic, and modern eras, each for its own reasons. Dissenting voices were routinely brushed aside, at least until the last half of the twentieth century.

The genesis of the present book was an extended essay Steinberg published in the *Art Quarterly* in 1973. "In the present study," he wrote then, "the picture emerges as both less secular and less simple; contrary to inherited notions, it is nowhere 'unambiguous and clear,' but consistently layered, double-functioning, polysemantic." In the new book, this argument is extended and reinforced by extensive allusions to the iconographic tradition that Leonardo drew upon. The ambiguity that Steinberg detects in the *Cenacolo* is not one of vagueness or indeterminacy, but rather of multiplicity and simultaneity, a profound affirmation of the coinherence of flesh and spirit. That Leonardo would have concealed symbolism and transcendence beneath a highly realistic surface does not strike Steinberg as contradictory; rather, it becomes another pictorial analogy for the Incarnation, in which the divinity is both concealed and revealed in the humanity of Christ.

In 1625, Cardinal Federigo Borromeo took note of the layered meanings in the painting when he wrote that the *Cenacolo* might best be interpreted not as the moment when Christ announces that one of the disciples will betray him, but the more metaphorically suggestive passage which speaks of the betrayer dipping "his hand with me in the dish." Here the moment of betrayal and the institution of the Eucharist become inextricably linked—the sinfulness that crucifies and the redeeming love that accepts crucifixion.

STEINBERG, BUILDING on this insight, launches into a close reading of the painting. His point of departure is the mysteriously symmetrical gestures of Christ and Judas. Christ's right hand and Judas' left hand reach toward a common area in front of St. John, the beloved disciple. In the zone framed by the outstretched fingers of the two men are a dish, a glass of wine, and bread. Early copyists, disturbed that the Son of God and his betrayer should seem to be sharing anything in common, tended to move or eliminate the dish. But if Christ and Judas dip their bread in the same dish, then two distinct moments are inextricably linked in this mirroring of hands. Once the existence of "successiveness and duration" has been established, it becomes possible to see other types of simultaneity in the painting. Steinberg presents dozens of them, including a direct relationship between the poses of several of the apostles and the specific ways they were eventually martyred. Their own deaths echo, and partake in, the eucharistic sacrifice.

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Nearly everyone admires the geometrical patterns in the painting—particularly the central equilateral triangle formed by Christ's head and hands (with its allusion to the Trinity), but Steinberg goes beyond these well-known elements to explore the full ramifications of Leonardo's depiction of space. For one thing, he points out that despite his devotion to verisimilitude, Leonardo has made Christ much larger than any of the apostles. In the complex disposition of the figures this isn't immediately apparent, but once again Leonardo labors both to conceal and to reveal. Making the figure of Christ larger than the disciples was a medieval convention, one that Leonardo has no problem adapting to his own uses.

Steinberg goes on to demonstrate that the representation of the "upper room" in the painting is problematic: Leonardo's overall design suggests a rectangular space, but the actual details shift the perspective from a rectangle to a trapezoid. But here too ambiguity and doubleness reflect the dual nature of the painting's central figure. The trapezoid becomes an extension of Christ's own presence and gesture, so that space itself, as Leonardo constructs it, is shaped by the incarnate son. In this "sanctification of space," Steinberg writes, "perspective becomes narrative symbolism, becomes choreography, iconography, homily, riddle, and mystery."

Steinberg concedes that little is known of Leonardo's religious beliefs. He merely points out that while the first edition of Vasari's life of Leonardo describes the artist as an unbeliever, the second edition claims him as a faithful son of the Church. Perhaps the best analogy is with Shakespeare: both men were creative geniuses whose work maintains an outwardly secular concern for the truth of the human condition, but lying just behind their visions was a Christian humanism with deep theological roots. One thing that is well known about Leonardo is his admiration for the great Christian humanist Nicholas of Cusa, whose understanding of *coincidentia oppositorum* Steinberg sees reflected in the *Cenacolo*'s incarnational paradoxes. Like Shakespeare, Leonardo elevates realism to the point where it touches mystery.

LEONARDO'S INCESSANT LAST SUPPER is a pleasure to read for a variety of reasons—among them the beauty of a lavishly illustrated art monograph, and the feeling that a tenacious detective is about to get to the bottom of an unsolved case. Another delight is the linguistic playfulness of Steinberg's prose. His sentences crackle with energy; his diction is always arresting, if occasionally over the top. From just the last chapter of the book, one comes across a bevy of bumptious words, including eloign, ajangle, swag, quinsome, tort, trapeziform, daedally, enfutured, twain, and scienceArt.

There can be little doubt that this book will be seen as equal in importance to *The Sexuality of Christ*. It enables us to see *The Last Supper* afresh, unencumbered by reductionism and cliché. Steinberg sees the painting as incessant, not only because of its ubiquity as a cultural icon, but also because of the unceasing paradoxes radiating from its central figure. Here is the God-man who turns betrayal into redemption, whose slight nod of resignation before the Father's will, far from being a sign of weakness, forms the apex of an equilateral triangle that literally gives shape to the world.

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The Primitive and the Pragmatic

HEAVEN BELOW: EARLY PENTECOSTALISM AND AMERICAN CULTURE. By GRANT WACKER. *Harvard University Press. 384 pp. $35.*

***Reviewed by* Cheryl Bridges Johns**

PENTECOSTALS ARE OFTEN skeptical regarding books written about them. And there is good reason for such skepticism. For the most part, the movement has been portrayed as existing on the emotional, theological, and economic fringe of Christianity. The common explanation for its existence has been a theory of social deprivation; the lives of its members are so harsh and deprived that they desire to escape this world for the glory of heaven above. On the other hand, books about Pentecostal history written by Pentecostals are often "romantic histories" that have a tendency to provide little critical reflection on the movement.

Grant Wacker's *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostalism and American Culture* is a welcome exception to both extremes. Wacker, an American religious historian who grew up in a Pentecostal home, identifies himself as "a pilgrim with one leg still stuck in the tent." As "50 percent outsider and 50 percent insider" he attempts to reveal the ethos of the Pentecostal movement during its infancy (1900-1925). This stance gives him both the critical distance needed to write an objective history and the ability to understand the distinct nuances and flavor of the movement. Above all, what makes this combination work is the apparent lack of hidden agendas or old grievances against the movement that was once his home.

What immediately strikes the reader is Wacker's writing style, which could best be described as "poetic prose." *Heaven Below* is filled with descriptions of everyday life that paint word pictures for the reader. His masterful use of extensive resources takes us into the world of early Pentecostals, eavesdropping on the conversations that took place around kitchen tables in order "to catch the multitudinous whispers of everyday life that . . . other studies have tended to overlook."

Wacker describes the Pentecostal movement as a slice out of the American pie: its adherents have typically been "farmers, artisans, shopkeepers, and service providers with the middle school education and honorable social standing characteristic of those groups." Pentecostal religion for these folk was the opportunity to explore "new possibilities" and to bring the benefits of heaven above to earth below.

The book offers a multifaceted description of various aspects of Pentecostal life, including the movement's temperament, its use of rhetoric and testimony, concepts of authority, customs, and leadership. There are fascinating chapters on women, race, and war. Each of these aspects is carefully researched, and Wacker's copious use of endnotes demonstrates his fluency with an array of primary sources: periodicals, journals, letters, sermons, books, newspapers, tracts, and so on.

It is Wacker's thesis that "the genius of the Pentecostal movement lay in its ability to hold seemingly incompatible impulses in productive tension: the primitive and the pragmatic." The primitive impulses were fueled by the movement's attempts to restore "apostolic faith," while the pragmatic stance helped the movement's adherents navigate the thickets of the modern world in which they lived. Pentecostals saw themselves as aliens and pilgrims in this world. Yet

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they possessed a remarkable ability to "weave heavenly aspirations with everyday realities."

Early Pentecostals embraced dialectical tensions. Their worship creatively united order and disorder, reason and unreason. Their rhetoric united Holy Ghost anointing with skilled pulpit oratory. Apostolics (a common name for early Pentecostals) were committed to living by faith, but they were also known for their frugal money management and hard work. They approached the holy life in the way they did not only for the purposes of escaping the entrapments of this world, but even more so because "such denials . . . afforded very tangible real-life benefits. Tobacco ruined health and wasted money. Alcohol destroyed jobs and families. Gambling wrecked savings. Immodest dress dehumanized both men and women. Circuses turned freaks into commodities."

In some cases the tension between the primitive and the pragmatic caused the movement to fall short of the ideal vision of heaven. The earth below exerted a strong pull, especially when it came to the issues of women, race, and war. Hence, we hear of early Pentecostals making compromises that later generations may wish they hadn't made. Pentecostals were among the first to grant women freedom to preach and to serve as leaders, but they were conflicted as to how much freedom should be allowed. Likewise, when it came to racial issues, Pentecostal worship was characterized by "a remarkable degree of interracial fraternity." However, "on the whole, Pentecostal culture failed to provide a sustained theology of racial reconciliation for whites and blacks alike." In time, the interracial quality of Pentecostal corporate life gave way to the demands of a segregated society. In regards to war, many of the early Pentecostals were committed to pacifism. However, as the years (and the world wars) went by, fewer and fewer were willing to uphold their principles.

Although Wacker does not attempt to offer theological interpretations of the Pentecostal movement, there are moments when he allows himself to engage in informal theological musing. As he writes, "In prostrate trance, which Pentecostals called being 'slain in the Spirit,' the entire torso became a holy emblem. In those situations Christ's physical death and resurrections was re-embodied—night after night, before the very eyes of believers and nonbelievers alike."

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AT OTHER TIMES, unfortunately, Wacker's lack of theological reflection leads him to fall back on clichés regarding the movement. For instance, his treatment of the early Pentecostals' view of Scripture follows the standard interpretation according to which the movement's adherents were biblical literalists who had little use for allegory or forms of biblical criticism. While this may be true in part, there is much evidence to suggest that Pentecostals were attempting to work out yet another dialectical tension, this time between Spirit and Word. The Bible was literally the Word of God, but the Spirit was the author and present interpreter of the sacred text. This assumption allowed for considerable freedom in biblical interpretation and helped separate the movement from the emerging fundamentalism of the day.

And this is not the only problem with Wacker's exposition. Take his choice to conceive of the central tension within Pentecostalism as a dialectic of "primitivism and pragmatism." Would it not have been better to use the language with which Pentecostals would have been familiar, viewing themselves as they did as "the people of God on mission in this world"? For the Apostolics the real tension was between "the already and the not yet."

As someone writing from inside the Pentecostal movement, I cannot help but wonder if the dialectical tension between heaven above and earth below that Wacker teases out in the lives of early Pentecostals is a mirror of his own continuing tension with the movement into which he was born. Would his assessments of Pentecostalism have been the same if he didn't feel so divided between his head and his heart? In saying that his head has escaped the movement while his heart remains inside it, he fuels the unjust stereotype that denigrates Pentecostalism as the most emotive, and least intellectual, wing of Christianity.

Overall, Wacker's treatment of early Pentecostalism is a valuable resource for those who wish to discover the primal dynamics of the movement. Readers will gain insight into how a fringe and oft-maligned group that threatened to consume itself in a "fury of charismatic fire" grew to include 500 million adherents worldwide.

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Getting the Founders Right

ON TWO WINGS: HUMBLE FAITH AND COMMON SENSE AT THE AMERICAN FOUNDING. By MICHAEL NOVAK. *Encounter. 250 pp. $23.95.*

***Reviewed by* Wilfred M. McClay**

NO ONE SHOULD BE surprised by the recent decision of the New Jersey Department of Education to remove the study of such Founding figures as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin from their state's history requirements. Though unusually foolish and indefensible, it is but the latest installment in a tragic ongoing trend—the wholesale abandonment of our national past by the people who ought to be sustaining it.

It goes nicely with the evidence gathered in an astounding study conducted by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, which found that seniors graduating from the fifty-five most selective colleges in the United States did not have a command of basic facts of American history, such as the meaning of our constitutional separation of powers or the historic events at Valley Forge and Yorktown. Our students are not only being denied their birthright as Americans, and being left unprepared for informed citizenship, but they are also being deprived of one of the most interesting and inspiring stories in human history.

Such findings, and countless others, ought by now to have sent a shockwave of outrage through academe, and through our society, comparable to that induced in the 1950s by the shock of the Soviet Union's Sputnik launching. But instead they

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seem to have been greeted with a collective yawn. Perhaps bad news about education has lost its ability to shock. Perhaps the American public, itself ignorant about its own history, is comfortable feeling a quiet contempt for such knowledge. Perhaps our educational institutions are aware of the bad news, but think it is not so bad, and at any rate have no intention of doing anything about it. Crimes of omission and commission have both played a role in this debacle, and it is hard to say which represent the greater betrayal. Ignorance and misrepresentation, conservative indolence and PC revisionism, skin without warts and (more often) warts without skin—all have been freely in evidence in recent years. What is clear is that Americans simply cannot count on their educators to give them the straight story, skin *and* warts, about the origins of their civilization. Increasingly, when it comes to history, teachers are not teaching much of anything at all.

In no area has this been more true than in the story of religion's pivotal role in our national history. Unlike the neglect of the Founders, which represents a relatively recent development, this has been the case for a long time. Even before the recent wave of politically motivated scholarship took hold some thirty years ago, the historical profession was already dominated by secular-minded practitioners who favored more or less materialist, rationalist, and structuralist explanations for historical change, and who therefore treated religion as, at most, a cultural epiphenomenon.

At best, religious faith was seen as an effect rather than a cause of historical events, or as the horse that certain secular innovations (such as constitutionalism and human rights) were constrained to ride in on. At worst, religion was the sworn enemy of the great American values of toleration, democracy, inclusiveness, rationality, enlightenment, science, pluralism, skepticism, privacy, and expressive freedom. One can see in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks an effort to tar all serious religious faiths, particularly those that have demanding moral and metaphysical frameworks, as dangerous, even to the point of being un-American. The war of the West against a virulent strain of Islam thus becomes reinterpreted as part of a war of sane secularism against two thousand years of crazed religious orthodoxy.

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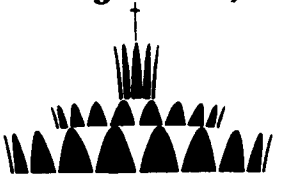

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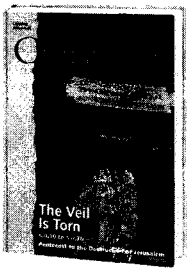

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could not be more timely. A lively, marvelously accessible, and infectiously enthusiastic book, packed with unforgettable quotations from the leaders of the American Revolution and the founders of the American republic, *On Two Wings* is both a restorative and a touchstone. It should be required reading for every American who wants to grasp the whole truth about the nation's neglected religious heritage.

Of course, it will not satisfy everyone. Novak steers a middle path between the partisans of both sides: on the one hand, those who want to claim the nation's heritage exclusively for Protestant Christianity; and on the other, those who choose to ignore the nation's religious roots, preferring to miscast the Founding as a triumph of secularism. Novak gets the balance of things just right. The most prominent leaders of the American Revolution were indeed men of the Enlightenment. But that does not mean they were secularists. In this respect, as in so many others, the American Revolution was unlike the French Revolution. In France, where antagonism to the ancien régime tended to be all-encompassing, if one was to oppose the monarchy, one was likely to oppose the Church, and in opposing the Church, to oppose religion. Not so in America, though, where Enlightenment and Protestantism existed in considerable harmony and complementarity.

Which brings us to the guiding metaphor of the book, the image of an American eagle kept aloft by two different, but equally necessary, wings. This enormously fertile image, which echoes Pope John Paul II's use of the same image to describe the relationship of faith and reason, conveys the core of the book. Novak has no use for those who dismiss the Enlightenment *en tout*. "Without the Enlightenment," he asserts, "America would not have assumed the beneficent shape it did." It is no exaggeration to point, as secularists do, to the dangers of religion unchecked and unstabilized. But it is equally true that the Enlightened wing itself could not have operated beneficently without the stabilizing work of a second wing, that of a pervasively shared "biblical metaphysics" grounded in the Jewish vision of the world, and reflected in the pattern of human history embodied in the Jewish and Christian scriptures. Our religious heritage and our secular heritage were not understood as antagonists by the generation of the Founders, and, Novak thinks, there is no compelling reason to see them as such today.

Indeed, there is every reason to recover the insight that came so readily to the Founders and their generation, but which now seems so remote to us, living as we do in an era in which Enlightened opinion holds religion to be best when privatized, the public square to be best when largely denuded, and the religious sentiments of Americans to be best edited out of the American past, as if they were so many contraband images of Leon Trotsky. There is every reason to hope that such recovery is possible. For all its dismal moments, human history also records moments of cultural renewal, when what seemed irretrievably lost and forgotten has been found and remembered, and reclaimed and made fresh for a new age. At a moment when the estimable tradition of liberalism is in so many respects at the end of its tether, etiolated and corrupt, it may be that its old sparring partner, religion, will turn out to be the very thing that can save and revitalize it.

In short, then, Novak believes that the design of the American regime reflects a profound understanding of the human person and of the delicate balancing act entailed in the optimal ordering of our common life. In making that case, Novak deals in an informal and winning manner with many of the most familiar misconceptions of the religious roots of the Founding. Weren't all the Founders Deists and unbelievers? Certainly not, Novak shows, and even the handful whose orthodoxy was questionable, such as Thomas Jefferson, were strong believers in the indispensable public good of religion. Indeed, it was Jefferson who famously observed, in his conscience-stricken meditations on the horror of slavery, that the "only firm basis" of the nation's liberties was "a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are of the gift of God," and are "not to be violated but with His wrath." That is an observation that perhaps rings truer today than ever before, at a time when doctors, technicians, and accountants have begun to arrogate unto themselves the right to define what counts as life, and when it should end.

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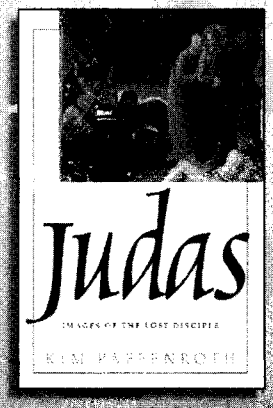
But what about the notion of a "godless" Constitution, which was explicitly opposed to any establishment of religion, and which (unlike so many of the state constitutions) did not invoke the name of the Deity? Novak makes short work of that plaint too, pointing out that such assertions depend on serious misunderstandings. The Constitution forbade a *national* establishment, but it also (as originally conceived) forbade the federal government from interfering in existing *state* establishments, such as that permitted under Article III of the Massachusetts State Constitution. It struck a balance between the need to permit individual religious liberty to flourish and the need to respect the communal norms that order our social existence. By refusing to follow the model of the state constitutions, the U.S. Constitution was making a distinction between the mode of governance proper to the states, which retained very considerable "police powers" extending to the regulation of matters of religion and morals, and the mode proper to itself, as the instrument for establishing a national government which was largely *federal* in character, and which therefore was prohibited from playing such a role.

THERE ARE MANY MORE riches to be found in this small, highly compressed book, but its value goes far beyond its utility as a compendium of historical insights and arguments. What Novak has given in *On Two Wings* is a fresh vision of the national experiment, and a wise corrective to much of the folly of our age. It is, to repeat, a book that is accessible to virtually any literate and motivated reader, and, as such, may in its own way serve as something of a counterbalance to the pervasive miseducation to which most Americans are now subjected. With such a book in wide circulation, we may yet recover a more vivid sense of what we have, and of what we have lost—and then have the boldness to go on to reclaim it.

Legends of the worst villain of all time...



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BRIEFLY NOTED

TOWARD AN ALTERNATIVE THEOLOGY: CONFESSIONS OF A NON-DUALIST CHRISTIAN. By SARA GRANT. *University of Notre Dame Press. 99 pp. $14.95.*

Sara Grant was a Scottish sister of the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus who lived in India from 1956 until her death in 2000. Before going to India she received a fairly typical pre-Vatican II, broadly Thomistic theological education, as well as reading classics and philosophy at Oxford (Iris Murdoch was among her tutors there). This book is the first U.S. publication of a series of lectures she gave at Cambridge in 1989. In it, she describes her intellectual obsession with what she calls the question of non-dualism, by which she means the question of how God is related to that which is not God. She found this question not fully or satisfactorily answered by the theological training she had received, not even by Aquinas' theory of relations. In India, after intense study of the works of Sankara, the eighth-century founder of Advaita Vedanta, in their original Sanskrit (this was a woman of great intellectual energy: it shines through her prose), she began to understand both Aquinas and Sankara better, and to approach an answer to her question, which is broadly in accord with the tradition that stems from Pseudo-Dionysius. Her formulations can be extreme, and they sometimes go so far as to call Christological orthodoxy into question; but her goal throughout is to understand Christianity better by way of serious intellectual and textual engagement with the Sanskritic Hindu tradition, and in this she is a

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model of both orthodoxy and devotion. She consistently resists what she calls "simplistic and piecemeal solutions" to difficult questions, such as how to do interreligious prayer and worship and what to say about universalism's possible truth, and she consistently presses the importance of hard intellectual work. All this should be applauded, as should the prose in which she writes, which in its lucidity, understatement, and elegance is a monument to the now almost defunct educational system that formed her.

— *Paul J. Griffiths*

At the End of an Age. By John Lukacs. *Yale University Press. 230 pp. $22.95.*

An astonishingly suggestive essay by the distinguished historian and author of, among many other books, *Confessions of an Original Sinner* and, more recently, *The Hitler of History* and *Five Days in London, May 1940.* The book is about the end of the age that began about five hundred years ago and is best described as the Age of Progress, based as it was upon a scientific dogma of mechanical causality, and a philosophical duality of object/subject, neither of which is believable today. But even that puts it too simply, since it seems that Lukacs is taking on almost everything associated with modernity in this updating of his much earlier works such as *Historical Consciousness* and *The Passing of the Modern Age.* Part of the fascination of reading Lukacs is watching an acute intelligence hone ever more sharply what it is that he has come to understand. It is as a historian that he first came to recognize the dominance of mind over matter and of potentiality over actuality in human affairs. In a way very different from the academic fashion shows of postmodernism with their debunkings of "foundationalism," Lukacs attends to rigorously honest thinking about thinking that leads to the perception that we understand much more than we know, and that accuracy about "facts" may often be purchased at the price of certainty about truth. What he came to understand as a historian is powerfully reinforced, he argues, by the indeterminacy and uncertainty unveiled by quantum physics. The insight that all knowledge is personal and achieved by participation will put the reader in mind of Michael Polanyi's *Personal Knowledge,* although Polanyi is not included in the abundant sources cited by Lukacs. While appreciative of the technical applications of science for the betterment of everyday life, Lukacs contends that the past century was in many ways intellectually stagnant, noting the continuing domination of nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century thinkers such as Marx, Darwin, Freud, and Einstein (the last of whom steadfastly resisted the quantum revolution). In his final chapter, Lukacs—who is, not incidentally, a Catholic—argues that Darwinism, based on a discredited notion of mechanical causality, is wrong not because it conflicts with Genesis but because it is incompatible with our understanding of the historical nature of reality. Lukacs sides with those who would "reverse Copernicus" by again locating man, the most complex of beings, at the center of the universe, and also at the center of time. The last consideration leads to a tentative probing of whether we should be open to the possibility that the end, as in The End, is near. *At the End of an Age* is a book that could be written only by a thinker who is coming toward the end of a career of extraordinary scholarship driven by a passion for taking on the really big questions. How is reality constructed? What is a fact? How can we know anything for sure? John Lukacs is not afraid to take risks, nor to admit to what he does not know. In fact, it is part of his argument that it is in the limitations of our knowledge, in the awareness of our ignorance, that we come closest to the truth. The book is, at the same time, provocative and inviting, wild and disciplined, adventurous and carefully reasoned. It is hard to imagine a reader coming away from it without thinking differently about things that really matter.

Islam and Dhimmitude: Where Civilizations Collide. By Bat Ye'or. *Fairleigh-Dickinson University Press. 520 pp. $19.95 paper.*

This volume could hardly be more timely. *Dhimmitude* refers to the second-class, and frequently persecuted, position of Christians and Jews under Muslim rule. (See the extended discussion of Bat Ye'or and her work in FT, Public Square, October 1997.) Her argument runs contrary, of course, to the usual and somewhat romantic idea of Islamic tolerance

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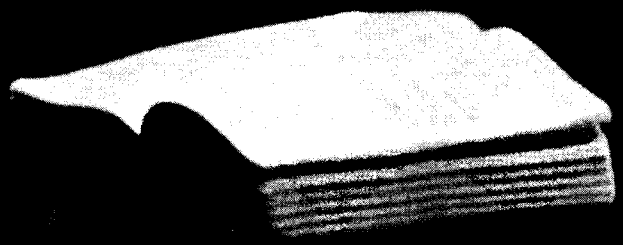

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Reverend Graham is not appearing at the Beeson Pastors School.

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that was promulgated in the nineteenth century, mainly by Jewish scholars, and has come back to haunt the state of Israel. As the subtitle suggests, Bat Ye'or, an Egyptian-born French scholar, sympathetically engages the "clash of civilizations" argument advanced by Samuel Huntington of Harvard. The author is sharply, some would say unfairly, critical of Christians who are complicit in the "Islamization" of Judaism and Christianity. One might point out in mitigation that the greatly diminished and lethally threatened Arab Christian community, for instance, is under enormous pressure to maintain good relations with the host society that is militantly Islamic and anti-Israel. The Holy See, of which she is also critical, has no choice but to be solicitous of the imperiled Christian communities of the Middle East. Bat Ye'or's larger argument, however, is that Christians and Jews must form new and stronger bonds of solidarity in countering Islam's religious, cultural, and terrorist aggression. That worthy goal would be more readily advanced if so many Jewish writers and organizations were not obsessed with seeing Christianity, rather than Islam, as the threatening Other. In a time when so many thoughtful readers want to get up to speed on Islam and the political Islam known as Islamism, this book should be warmly welcomed.

MEASURING ETERNITY: THE SEARCH FOR THE BEGINNING OF TIME. By MARTIN GORST. *Broadway. 338 pp. $23.95.*

An enjoyable and instructive ramble through history by a British science writer. The title and subtitle, however, are misleading. The subject of time and eternity is barely touched upon. Gorst's subject is the much smaller, although fascinating, question of dating the age of the universe. He notes that biblical religion broke with all earlier religions and philosophies in asserting that the universe did have a beginning, a claim now taken for granted by all moderns. Gorst is appreciative of the immense scholarly labor of the seventeenth-century Bishop James Ussher who concluded, on the basis of biblical evidence and after considering numerous alternative accounts, that the world was created at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 22, 4004 B.C. From Ussher he moves on through the centuries, portraying eccentrics and geniuses involved in geological, astronomical, and other labors that arrived at the still not secure scientific consensus that the universe is about fourteen billion years old and rapidly expanding toward an unknown end. Like the mountain that is climbed because it is there, exploration and speculation about the beginning of the universe is a project that needs no practical application in order to continue without end. Or at least until the end, if there is one. As to whether the universe has an end in the sense of a purpose, Gorst does not say.

LIVING ICONS: PERSONS OF FAITH IN THE EASTERN CHURCH. By MICHAEL PLEKON. *University of Notre Dame Press. 336 pp. $37.50.*

The author, a priest of the Orthodox Church in America, provides fetching profiles of ten Orthodox figures, mainly of the twentieth century, whose lives were, like icons, "windows into eternity." Some of them were also martyrs who died for the faith, reminding us, as we need to be reminded again and again, that the past hundred years are "the century of the martyrs," both East and West. Telling the story through these lives, Father Plekon also provides an inviting introduction to an Orthodox world of piety, reflection, and radical devotion that is too little known in the West.

CHRISTIANITY ON TRIAL: ARGUMENTS AGAINST RELIGIOUS BIGOTRY. By VINCENT CARROLL and DAVID SHIFLETT. *Encounter. 244 pp. $15.95.*

For the benighted who believe Christianity's contribution to the development of modern science, the rule of law, care of the environment, democracy, and charity was as crucial as the Romans' contribution to manned flight, the authors offer a reminder: the historical record.

SPREADING MISANDRY: THE TEACHING OF CONTEMPT FOR MEN IN POPULAR CULTURE. By PAUL NATHANSON and KATHERINE K. YOUNG. *McGill-Queen's University Press. 370 pp. $39.95.*

The authors make a persuasive, if labored, addition to the growing liter-

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ature documenting a pervasive hostility in popular culture to traditional masculinity. Readers can decide for themselves whether September 11 has taken manly men off the endangered species list.

NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME: EVANGELICALS AND THE CHALLENGE OF WORLD RELIGIONS. Edited by JOHN G. STACKHOUSE, JR. *Baker. 208 pp. $19.99 paper.*

For evangelical Protestants who believe that not only Jesus, but a prescribed conversion experience of Jesus, is essential to salvation, the challenge of world religions is challenging indeed. It says here that the book asks questions such as, "Are non-Christian faiths legitimate means of accessing the divine?" Accessing the divine? (God@aol.com?) Actually, most of the essays are not so superficial at all, and represent a serious, if preliminary, coming to terms with serious questions by authors who are seriously evangelical.

DETOXIFYING THE CULTURE. By JOHN HOWARD. *America House. 188 pp. $19.95.*

We can't turn back the clock? Nonsense, says John Howard, former college president and senior fellow at the Howard Center for Family, Religion & Society in Rockford, Illinois. This collection of essays, speeches, and personal reflections represents a brand of conservatism that is not afraid to be called "simplistic" in its call to return to the basics of personal integrity, Christian faith, and life lived as a gift to others. Disarming in its straightforwardness, the message is, for those prepared to receive it, deeply bracing.

TRIUMPH: THE POWER AND THE GLORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. By H. W. CROCKER III. *Prima. 499 pp. $29.95.*

Enough of the whimpering and whining. In this ramble through two millennia, Catholicism is a fighting faith, and "triumphalism" is its way of being in the world. The scholarship is sometimes shaky, and the author is impatient with nuances and qualifying counter-indications, but *Triumph* is an invigorating tale that will likely be welcomed by readers who are weary of being told that defeatism is a virtue.

IN DOMINICO ELOQUIO—IN LORDLY ELOQUENCE. Edited by PAUL M. BLOWERS et al. *Eerdmans. 438 pp. $45.*

A festschrift in tribute to the distinguished church historian Robert Louis Wilken. Twenty-two of his students and colleagues contribute essays on the Church Fathers, with a particular accent on their biblical exegesis, which has been among Wilken's abiding interests. Professor Wilken is a regular contributor to this journal and the editors join in heaping honor upon his hoary head.

EVANGELIZING THE CHOSEN PEOPLE: MISSION TO THE JEWS IN AMERICA, 1880-2000. By YAAKOV ARIEL. *University of North Carolina Press. 367 pp. $14.95 paper.*

An overview of missionary activity among Jews in America written by an Israeli Jewish scholar who is not a believer in Jesus but is refreshingly fair to Jews who are. The phenomenon of Messianic Judaism, this book suggests, is not unrelated to the decline of religious observance among Jews in America.

ON THE VIRTUES. By JOHN CAPREOLUS. Translated with an Introduction and Notes by KEVIN WHITE and ROMANUS CESSARIO, O.P. *Catholic University of America Press. 395 pp. $79.95.*

A new translation of a defense of St. Thomas' conclusions on faith, hope, and charity by John Capreolus (1380-1444), the "Prince of Thomists." Foreword by Servais Pinckaers.

VISUAL FAITH: ART, THEOLOGY, AND WORSHIP IN DIALOGUE. By WILLIAM A. DYRNESS. *Baker. 192 pp. $21.99.*

A refreshing summons for Christians to get serious about their role as patrons of the arts or else temper their criticism about what kind of art is produced. The author does a fine job of incorporating the theological aesthetics of Paul Tillich, Simone Weil, and Hans Urs von Balthasar into a Reformed perspective.

ROE V. WADE: THE ABORTION RIGHTS CONTROVERSY IN AMERICAN HISTORY. By N. E. H. HULL and PETER CHARLES HOFFER. *University Press of Kansas. 315 pp. $35.*

The authors announce at the outset that they differ on the abortion question, and the tension that creates is palpable, perhaps even debilitating. In this legal and social history of abortion the story swerves unpredictably between a judicious historiography of abortion's place in American history and a hagiography of pro-abortion derring-do. In the end, the book serves the accidental goal of revealing the moral schizophrenia that accompanies any attempt to muddle through the abortion issue without a defining commitment.

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THE PUBLIC SQUARE

A Continuing Survey of Religion and Public Life

Richard John Neuhaus

Whatever You Do, Don't Mention the Jews

The term hypocrisy is much over-used and much misused. It comes from the Greek, of course, and means to act on the stage, to pretend to be what one is not or to believe what one does not believe. For all of us, and in various aspects of our lives, there is a gap between who we represent ourselves to be and who we really are; between what we say we believe and what we, at least at times, really think. That is not hypocrisy. That is the consequence of human frailty, confusion, cowardice, or, sometimes, a simple desire not to hurt the feelings of others.

Hypocrisy is something much more deliberate and calculated. Hypocrisy aptly describes much discussion, or non-discussion, about the role of Jews in American life. It is commonly practiced among Christians, and my Jewish associates assure me it is as common among Jews. A significant difference is that there is a large literature produced by Jews on Jews in American life, whereas non-Jewish discussions of the subject tend to be confined to the shadowed world of bigotry and conspiracy-mongering. For non-Jews who understand how things are done, Jews in American life is a forbidden subject, at least in public.

Consider the recently released tapes from President Richard M. Nixon's Oval Office when, in 1972, he and Billy Graham discussed what they obviously viewed as the Jewish problem. Referring to Jewish domination of the media, Graham says, "This stranglehold has got to be broken or this country's going down the drain." "You believe that?" responded Nixon. "Yes, sir," said Graham. "Oh, boy. So do I," said Nixon. "I can't ever say that, but I believe it." "No, but if you get elected a second time, then we might be able to do something," Graham said. Mr. Nixon turned the conversation to Jewish influence in Hollywood, and Mr. Graham said, "A lot of Jews are great friends of mine. They swarm around me and are friendly to me because they know that I am friendly to Israel and so forth. But they don't know how I really feel about what they're doing to this country, and I have no power and no way to handle them." Nixon replied, "You must not let them know."

Graham's office promptly issued a statement on behalf of the evangelist, now eighty-three and ailing, saying that he did not remember the conversation with Nixon and the reported remarks certainly do not reflect his thinking about Jews and Judaism. A source familiar with the Nixon White House and with Mr. Graham says he is sure that the conversation was very specifically about *leftist* Jews, which, as we shall see, does not quite fit the definition of anti-Semitism. But the press played it as an instance of anti-Semitism, and that does provide an occasion for trying to understand a phenomenon usually obscured by dissembling, evasion, fear, and, yes, hypocrisy.

No Dirty Little Secret

Anti-Semites—and there really are anti-Semites—think they have a corner on a dirty little secret. Their supposed secret is that Jews have a disproportionate influence in American society. But of course that is no secret at all; it is the obvious fact. About 2 percent of the population, a little over five million people, exercise an influence far out of proportion to their numbers. In certain sectors of American life—notably in media, entertainment, prestige research universities, and to a lesser extent in finance—people in that 2 percent hold 20, 40, or even more than 50 percent of the positions of greatest influence. It is quite astonishing. It is clearly disproportionate. Some say that it is not only disproportionate, which is

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obvious, but that it is inordinate, meaning that it is excessive and contrary to the right order of things. People who say that are also given to suggesting that the disproportionate influence of Jews is baneful. Certified anti-Semites say out loud, and many others say sotto voce, that America has a Jewish problem.

A recent survey, confirming many earlier surveys, indicates that Jews and Judaism have a very high approval rating. Asked about religious groups in America, 90 percent had a favorable view of United Methodists. What's not to like about United Methodists? In second place were Jews, at 88 percent. "Only in America," one might say, and there is truth in that. One might also add, "Only in opinion polls." I have been critical in this space of Jewish defense groups that are forever sniffing about in paranoid fashion and detecting signs of imminent pogroms. But one need not be paranoid or even inordinately suspicious to be skeptical about such survey research findings. Who except a declared anti-Semite would tell a pollster that he has an unfavorable view of Jews, or even that he does not have a favorable view of Jews? The stigma of anti-Semitism has been so effectively employed that it makes most survey research on the question virtually useless.

What people say over the kitchen table, or even at the more formal dinner party when there are no Jews around, is something else. There is no way or proving it, but I expect that most non-Jewish Americans were not surprised, never mind shocked, by the 1972 discussion in the Oval Office. This does not mean they agree with what was said, only that they have heard it before. I also expect that few Jews were surprised, although many were shocked. It is the shock of being so frontally encountered by a reality that you hoped, but did not really believe, had disappeared.

America as "Host" Society

I had a small part in Charles Silberman's very useful 1985 study, *A Certain People: American Jews and Their Lives Today.* Silberman's conclusions about the Jewish circumstance in America lean toward the optimistic, and he has a kind word about my efforts to deal with our differences in a way that "will strengthen rather than weaken our pluralistic society." He goes on to say, "Unfortunately, the approach Neuhaus himself proposes would have the opposite effect, for once again it would make Jews strangers in their own land." The approach he has in mind is my argument that we must come to terms with the fact that America is—incorrigibly, confusedly, and conflictedly—a Christian society. Silberman agrees with the Reform rabbi who told me many years ago, "When I hear the phrase 'Christian America,' I see barbed wire." The question of Jewish "at homeness" in America has run through numerous studies over the years by Jewish scholars such as Nathan Glazer, Milton Himmelfarb, Ludwig Lewisohn, and Oscar Janowsky, as well as by non-Jews such as E. Digby Baltzell and John Murray Cuddihy. The Jewish complaint is typically against the slightest suggestion that America is the "host society," thereby implying that Jews are somehow guests or are here on probation.

In his strongly philo-Semitic book, *A History of the Jews,* the British writer Paul Johnson puts it this way: "For all these reasons it became perhaps misleading to see the American Jewish community as part of the diaspora at all. Jews in America felt themselves more American than Jews in Israel felt themselves Israeli. It was necessary to coin a new word to define their condition, for American Jews came to form, along with the Jews of Israel and the Jews of the diaspora proper, the third leg of a new Jewish tripod, on which the safety and future of the whole people equally depended. There was the diaspora Jew, there was the ingathered Jew, and, in America, there was the possessing Jew." Perhaps "possessing Jew" is not the best phrase, suggesting as it does the stereotype of the possessive, or even grasping, Jew. Better to speak of the Jew completely at home, or at least as completely at home as anyone can be short of the Messianic Age.

Sumptuary Fears

But is the American Jewish community completely at home? If one can speak of a community feeling, does it *feel* completely at home? There is reason to doubt it. Not long ago I was invited to a gala dinner at the Waldorf Astoria to honor the head of a major Jewish organization. It was a lavish affair, with about 1,200 of the rich and famous in formal attire in unabashed display of their having made it. There was a sprinkling of goyim (no disparagement intended), and I was the only Christian cleric. The book of tributes to the honoree, placed on each chair, was as thick as the Manhattan telephone directory. Politicians from the President and mayor on down, stars of stage and screen, and numerous other celebrities all paid tribute, either in person or by live video. The tributes went on and on for well over two hours before we got to dinner. Between the speeches were film clips of the skeletal survivors of Auschwitz and Dachau, along with heaps of corpses and scenes illustrating Hitler's rise to power. Almost every tribute included at least one declaration of "Never again!"

Most Americans would, I am sure, have found the evening surreal. Here assembled in the Grand Ballroom of the Waldorf Astoria in New York were over a thousand of the richest, most powerful, and most

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influential people in America. It was, on the one hand, a community's exuberant display of its unparalleled success. On the other, the unmistakable message of the evening was that this is a community perilously poised on the precipice of the abyss, of Auschwitz happening again, and this time in America. It was not a community that appeared to be securely at home, or at least did not appear to be for the purposes of that evening.

The last point is critical, I am told by a Jewish friend who was there. After all, he observes, the purpose of the occasion was to celebrate the leader of a Jewish defense organization, and a defense organization is only important if it can fuel the fear of the horrors against which it is defending the community. On such an evening, allowances must be made for hyperbole. Moreover, as many Jewish writers have argued in recent years, a community requires commonalities, and for most American Jews the religion of Judaism no longer provides that. The de facto religion is remembering the Holocaust, commitment to the State of Israel, and keeping alive a sense that, if the community lets down its guard for even a moment, they (whoever "they" may be) will do it again. Rabbi David Novak has famously said, "As a Jew, I do not get up in the morning cursing Hitler but praising the God of Israel." That is no doubt true of the minority of American Jews who are in any way observant. But, as Elliott Abrams has written (FT, June/July 1997), it is Jewishness and not Judaism that holds together "the Jewish community" in its tribal identity. Praise of the God of Israel was not conspicuous at the Waldorf.

That evening does not tell the whole story by any means, but neither, on the basis of my own experience over the years, was it entirely atypical. It seems that the discordant notes of security and danger, of achievement and vulnerability, of belonging and otherness, are constantly contending in Jewish thinking about the American circumstance. The various notes wax or wane in response to discernments of what "the others" are thinking about Jews. There are those—Leon Wieseltier of the *New Republic* comes to mind—who make no secret of their contempt for Christianity, and are as offended when the "others" do not think about Jews as when they do think about Jews.

"We" and "Them," and Vice Versa

Serving on a university panel discussing Jews, Christians, and the American experiment, I was confronted by a question from the audience. "Do you have any idea," the woman asked, "how offensive it is to me as a Jew to hear you speak of Jews as 'them'? In America, we are all 'we.'" Well, yes and no. Yes, we must affirm as much as possible what we have in common as Americans and, I would add, as children of the covenant. And no, the very fact of a panel on Jews, Christians, and the American experiment assumes differences of consequence. I am not a Jew. As with the Jewish participants in the discussion, there is a "we" and a "them." The purpose is to understand what and how the other thinks. The alternative to doing that is to accept Richard Nixon's counsel to Billy Graham: "You must not let them know."

Until fairly recently, there were those who thought it was the better part of wisdom for Jews to maintain a low profile in public. It seems odd now, but in 1965 when Abraham Beame first ran for mayor of New York, there were prominent Jewish voices publicly fretting that a Jewish mayor might provoke a backlash. (He lost that year, but then ran successfully in 1973.) Since then we have had what seems like a lifetime of Ed Koch as mayor (he frequently appears to think he still is mayor) and now there is Michael Bloomberg, and nobody gives it a thought, at least not in public. In politics, both nationally and in the states, the low-profile days are long past. This is not true in the media, in entertainment, or in the prestige universities, where nobody is supposed to notice the disproportionate Jewish influence. Why does 2 percent of the population carry such weight? Anti-Semites, who think the disproportion is inordinate, and those who flirt with anti-Semitism, typically resort to conspiracy theories of one sort or another. Others refer to a prodigiously achievement-oriented subculture, and yet others (very quietly) to genetic superiority. Then there are those, Jews and Christians alike, who would not discount the importance of Jews being God's chosen people.

Jewish influence was viewed as a "Jewish problem" when Jews were conspicuously prominent in attacking what was taken to be the American way of life. This was the case with the Old Left in the first part of the last century, when Jews were portrayed as predominant in the leadership of Communist and socialist movements, often because they were predominant. Irving Howe and, more recently, Ronald Radosh and David Horowitz have written compellingly about that Jewish world of the Old Left. The role of Jewish activists and ideologues in defining the newer leftisms of the sixties and onward is also notable. In what is aptly described as the culture wars, and especially in the central dispute over abortion, Jews are overwhelmingly on one side. In electoral politics, Jews tend to be Democrats, and on the left of the party. As Milton Himmelfarb has memorably written, Jews have incomes like Episcopalians and voting patterns like Puerto Ricans. One great Jewish dissent from the left is on affirmative action and quota systems. Jews are, understandably, not enthusiastic

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about a notion of equality that would limit them to no more than 2 percent of anything. The other great dissent from the left, for obvious reasons, is on support for Israel. (In such generalizations, important exceptions must be made for some of the Orthodox, but they are a small minority.)

On an array of questions that come under the rubric of "church-state relations," Jews have in the last fifty years been at odds with most Americans. Generally speaking, they have thought the naked public square a very good thing. The more secular the society, the better it is for Jews. That was the rule advanced by the late Leo Pfeffer of the American Jewish Congress, for instance, and, beginning in the 1940s, he persuaded the Supreme Court to rule again and again against religious expressions and symbols—inevitably Christian in nature—in our public life. Public secularism had not always been the position of Jewish leadership, as is admirably demonstrated by David Dalin and Jonathan Sarna in a study sponsored by the Institute on Religion and Public Life, *Religion and State in the American Jewish Experience.* The older Jewish position, and the position of the Orthodox today, is not in favor of a naked public square but of fair treatment of all religions in the public square. There are signs that that position may be in the ascendancy today, but a half century of what I have called "the Pfefferian inversion"—subordinating the "free exercise" provision of the First Amendment to the "no establishment" provision—is still taking its toll.

An Adversarial Subculture

Jews have been part of the American experiment since its constitutional beginnings. Until fifty years ago, they were very much viewed as guests in the host society of Christian America. Many older Americans well remember the days when clubs, societies, neighborhoods, and prestige law firms made no bones about being "exclusive," and when universities such as Harvard and Columbia observed a "Jewish quota" in admissions. It is understandable that most Jews think the secularization of our public life has been good for Jews. Whether or not the connection is causal, over the last half century secularization and full social enfranchisement have proceeded apace. As with other ethnic and religious groups, the Jewish ways of negotiating a relationship with American society have changed over the years. Now it appears that a devotion to public secularism is no longer, if it ever was, a source of Jewish security and flourishing. It has become, rather, a liability that unnecessarily places American Jewry in an adversarial relationship to the culture, provoking the perception that Jews really are, in Silberman's phrase, strangers in their own country.

We may well be entering a new chapter in the long story of the Jewish experience in America. The promise and complexities of this new period are addressed in a book of essays I have edited that is just out from Eerdmans, *The Chosen People in an Almost Chosen Nation.* I expect historians may designate people such as Will Herberg, Irving Kristol, Milton Himmelfarb, and Midge Decter as the prophets of this new era in the American Jewish experience. Over the years, they and a few others vigorously dissented from the proposition that it was good for the Jews to be a secularizing adversarial culture. They have proposed a more promising way toward unqualified "at homeness." In this view, anti-Semitism is not the great threat. As Kristol has remarked, "The problem is not that other Americans hate us; the problem is that they want to marry us." To the very real possibility of complete assimilation leading to the disappearance of the Jewish community, thinkers such as David Novak and Elliott Abrams have argued that the answer is for Jews to become more serious about the religion of Judaism, as distinct from the ethnic habits of Jewishness.

To Speak the Truth

In the fall of 2000, more than two hundred Jewish scholars issued *Dabru Emet* (To Speak the Truth), proposing a Jewish understanding of Christianity in response to the many statements of recent decades offering a Christian understanding of Judaism. The first purpose of *Dabru Emet* is to advance religious and theological understanding, but the premise is also that Christians and Jews will live together in greater security and mutual respect if they understand one another as participants in covenantal purpose seeking to be faithful to the God of Israel.

Some Jewish thinkers have reacted to *Dabru Emet* very negatively. Affirming religious commonalities, they contend, will obscure the differences between Christianity and Judaism, leading to more intermarriages and the loss of Jewish children to Christianity or to religious nothingness. The argument is that a degree of interreligious hostility—even, as one critic puts it, an "instinctive repugnance" toward Christianity—is necessary to preserve Jewish identity. This is what sociologists used to call an "out-group identity strategy." It has been tried, and it has not produced a very healthy relationship between Christians and Jews. More important, and whatever its sociological merits or demerits, it is not true to how Jews and Christians should understand one another religiously. That at least is the position of the Jewish scholars who produced *Dabru Emet,* and I am convinced they are right.

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Jews should not be viewed, and should not view themselves, as strangers in their own land. It should be obvious to all that this is their land as much as it is our land. Yet, if there is to be a distinct Jewish community, there will of necessity continue to be a "we" and a "them." Silberman titled his book *A Certain People.* He could not quite bring himself to use the more biblical phrase, "a peculiar people." Among the peculiarities of this people is that they will almost certainly continue to exercise an influence dramatically disproportionate to their numbers. Those who think that influence inordinate must just get used to it. It should be viewed as a permanent feature of American life.

As to what the future actually holds, very different scenarios are proposed. One can envision a religious awakening, with more Jews adhering to Judaism, having more babies, and rearing them in the tradition. That, combined with a growing awareness of the spiritual bond between Jew and Christian, and that bond being reinforced by the hostility of radical Islamism to both Jew and Christian, suggests one possible future. Many Jewish leaders see a more doleful prospect: secularizing forces further loosening adherence to Judaism, continued or increasing levels of intermarriage with most of the children and almost all of the grandchildren lost to the community, resulting in a dispirited remnant headed for virtual oblivion. Another prospect little discussed in public but on the minds of many is that, God forbid, the State of Israel could finally fail, with the great majority of Israelis coming here and almost doubling overnight the size of American Jewry.

Then there are the discussions such as that in the Oval Office of 1972, which are by no means a thing of the past. Such ugliness feeds on the secretive presumption of Nixon that "You must not let them know." The story of *The Chosen People in an Almost Chosen Nation* has matured to the point where both Jew and Christian can and must let one another know what we think. It is necessary that we do so if we are not to be strangers to one another in our own land.

FT

Bernard Lewis on Understanding Islam

The mention of his name is usually accompanied by descriptives such as "the distinguished," "the eminent," or "the renowned." Frequently he is simply called "the doyen of Middle Eastern studies." All such honorifics are amply deserved. Going back many years, Bernard Lewis, Professor Emeritus of Near Eastern studies at Princeton, has been a personal friend and, more than anyone else, my guru on matters Islamic. His new book is *What Went Wrong? Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response* (Oxford University Press). It is a mix of lectures and essays from the 1990s, and a font of wisdom on which to draw in order to put the world after September 11 into perspective. I don't say Lewis is right about everything, and I know there are scholars who criticize him for over-generalizing, but that is the kind of criticism to be expected from academics who specialize in specializing. Lewis, whose command of his subject nobody can challenge, specializes in making careful and accessible arguments. His exercise of that gift and calling is on magisterial display in *What Went Wrong?*

For instance, Lewis writes that, during the period that we call medieval, most Muslims viewed Christendom in terms of the Byzantine Empire, "which gradually became smaller and weaker until its final disappearance with the Turkish conquest of Constantinople in 1453." "[In the Muslim view] the remoter lands of Europe were seen in much the same light as the remoter lands of Africa—as an outer darkness of barbarism and unbelief from which there was nothing to learn and little even to be imported, except slaves and raw materials. For both the northern and the southern barbarians, their best hope was to be incorporated in the empire of the caliphs, and thus attain the benefits of religion and civilization. For the first thousand years or so after the advent of Islam, this seemed not unlikely, and Muslims made repeated attempts to accomplish it."

We understandably view history in terms of the rise of the West, and seen from today's circumstance, that makes sense. But that is not how, for a very long time, Muslims viewed it. From its beginnings, Islam was on a millennium-long roll. Advancing from Arabia, Muslim armies conquered Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and North Africa, all of which had been part of Christendom. They then went on to conquer Spain, Portugal, and Sicily, and to invade deep into France. In 846, Arab forces sacked Ostia and Rome. Only then did Christendom begin to organize a counterattack, leading up to what we call the Crusades aimed at recovering the Holy Land. In many tellings of the story, the Crusades were the horrible thing that Christians did to Muslims, and there is no doubt that horrible things were done on all sides. What is frequently overlooked in those tellings, however, is that the Crusades were a response to Muslim aggression and, very important, that they failed. The Christians were repelled. The Muslims won, reinforcing their sense of invincibility against the infidels.

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The Tables Turn

The Christian powers had occasional successes, such as the great naval battle of Lepanto, in the Gulf of Patras in Greece, in 1571. Pope Pius V attributed the victory to the intercession of the Blessed Virgin and in gratitude made October 7 the feast of the Rosary. While Lepanto was a crushing defeat for Muslim forces, they viewed it as a setback at the margins of world affairs. Lewis describes Lepanto as "a great shot in the arm in the West, a minor ripple in the East." Islam was still on a roll. By the eighteenth century, however, the tables were beginning to turn. On numerous fronts—science, politics, economics, military prowess—Christendom increasingly had the initiative. Western travelers began to penetrate Muslim lands, and "experts" of various sorts sold their services to Muslim states. "For Muslims," writes Lewis, "first in Turkey and later elsewhere, this brought a shocking new idea—that one might learn from the previously despised infidel." Here entered for the first time the problem of how to keep Western influence in check. For a while, the Greek Christians, who deeply resented their treatment by the Catholic West, were a help to Ottoman rule. As the patriarch of Constantinople is supposed to have said, "Rather the turban of the Turk than the tiara of the Pope."

By the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, some Muslims realized that they were falling behind. A few leaders even began to send students to the West in order to learn about the new things—especially military things—to be found there. This raised the religious and legal question as to whether it was permissible to imitate the infidels. "The answer of the religious authorities," writes Lewis, "was that it is permissible to imitate the infidels in order to more effectively fight against them." Modernization, understood as catching up, could be endorsed with careful qualifications. Westernization, understood as cultural imitation, was something else. The West was always Christendom, and therefore the enemy of the true faith. More progressive Muslim leaders looked for the secret to success in those aspects of the West that were most different from their own experience and, Lewis adds, "not tainted by Christianity." This is why there was great sympathy for the French Revolution, which projected itself in the East as anti-Christian. But under the Empire and the Restoration, France lost its appeal. "For the whole of the nineteenth and most of the twentieth century the search for the hidden talisman concentrated on two aspects of the West—economics and politics, or to put it differently, wealth and power."

The Christian "taint" made cultural influence forbidden, with the consequence that Islam also gained little economically. According to the World Bank, Lewis notes, the whole of the Arab world, with about 300 million people, exports less to the rest of the world than does Finland with its five million people. Apart from oil, of course, and its effective exploitation is in Western hands. Unlike the rising powers of Asia—such as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, et al., most of which started from a lower economic base than the Middle East—Muslim countries have not caught on to the rudiments of investment, capital formation, job creation, and productivity. "The difference between Middle Eastern and Western approaches," Lewis writes, "can be seen even in their distinctive form of corruption, from which neither society is exempt. In the West, one makes money in the market, and uses it to buy or influence power. In the East, one seizes power, and uses it to make money. Morally there is no difference between the two, but their impact on the economy and on the polity is very different." I'm not sure he's quite right about there being no moral difference. Money influencing power can be corruption, but it is not an evil of the same magnitude as perpetuating grinding poverty or ruling by a system that is aptly described as tyranny tempered by assassination.

The differences between the West and the Near East are evident, Lewis emphasizes, in different attitudes toward women, science, and music. Islam, like most non-Christian societies, permits polygamy and concubinage, and Western visitors to Muslim lands have traditionally evidenced a predictable interest in the harem system and have spoken with ill-concealed envy of what they take to be the rights of Muslim men. "Muslim visitors to Europe," on the other hand, "speak with astonishment, often with horror, of the immodesty and frowardness of Western women, of the incredible freedom and absurd deference accorded them, and of the lack of manly jealousy of males confronted with the immorality and promiscuity in which their womenfolk indulge."

There were three groups of people who did not benefit from the general Muslim principle of legal and religious equality—unbelievers, slaves, and women. Lewis does not depict *dhimmitude*—the system under which non-Muslims, mainly Christians and Jews, live in Muslim societies—in terms as severe as those employed by Bat Ye'or, whose work has been discussed at length in these pages. Yes, he suggests, the infidels were definitely second- or third-class citizens, but for the most part their lot was tolerable, so long as they did not challenge Muslim dominance. Slavery in the Middle East, he also says, was not so harsh as slavery in the Caribbean or North America. Actually, slavery was not officially abolished in some

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Mideast countries until the 1960s, and still flourishes today in, for instance, Sudan.

Keeping women in what is thought to be their place is deeply entrenched in Arab societies. "Westerners tend naturally to assume that the emancipation of women is part of liberalization, and that women will consequently fare better in liberal than in autocratic regimes. Such an assumption would be false, and often the reverse is true." Some notoriously oppressive regimes have advanced the legal emancipation of women, while in somewhat more open societies, such as Egypt, the weight of tradition has successfully prevented such change. For radical Islamists, such as the former Taliban in Afghanistan, the confinement of women to their traditional roles is at the top of their agenda. "The emancipation of women," Lewis writes, "more than any other single issue, is the touchstone of difference between modernization and Westernization." Modernization is the adoption of technologies, especially those of warfare and propaganda. But the emancipation of women is Westernization. "It must be kept from entering the body of Islam, and where it has already entered, it must be ruthlessly excised."

Muhammad His Own Constantine

There are odd twists and turns here. For instance, in the military, civil service, and often in everyday street wear, men have adopted Western styles of clothing. Even the diplomats of the Islamic Republic of Iran wear Western suits, "with only the missing necktie to symbolize their rejection of Western culture and its symbols." Why the rejection of the necktie? "Perhaps because of its vaguely cruciform shape," Lewis suggests. In the final analysis, it all does come back to religion and what Muslims continue to view as Christendom. In its view of the right ordering of the world, Islam has nothing remotely comparable to the Christian understanding of sovereignties in tension, as evident in Christ's words about rendering what is due to Caesar and to God. Lewis emphasizes that Christianity, until its legal toleration and later establishment in the fourth century, had the experience of three hundred years struggling against authority. "Christianity was a persecuted religion—different from, sometimes opposed to, and often oppressed by the state authority."

The contrast with Islam could not be more dramatic. Lewis puts it nicely: "Muhammad was, so to speak, his own Constantine. . . . At no time did [Islam] create any institution corresponding to, or even remotely resembling, the Church in Christendom." There have been and are, to be sure, conflicts between religious and political authorities. But, unlike the case of the Church in the West, there is no institutionalizing of a claim to a distinct sovereignty in tension with the sovereignty of the state. Put differently, the "Constantinianism" of Islam is radically monistic. And again, far from having gone through a long period of struggling and persecution, Islam understood itself from the very beginning to be a force of all-encompassing conquest, and the success of its first millennium powerfully reinforced that self-understanding.

> Muhammad achieved victory and triumph in his own lifetime. He conquered his promised land, and created his own state, of which he himself was the supreme sovereign. As such, he promulgated laws, dispensed justice, levied taxes, raised armies, made war, and made peace. In a word, he ruled, and the story of his decisions and actions as ruler is sanctified in Muslim scripture and amplified in Muslim tradition. . . . The state was the church and the church was the state, and God was head of both, with the Prophet as his representative on earth. In the words of an ancient and much cited tradition: "Islam, the ruler, and the people are like the tent, the pole, the ropes and the pegs. The tent is Islam, the pole is the ruler, the ropes and pegs are the people. None can thrive without the others."

Lewis continues: "Such terms as clergy or ecclesiastic cannot properly be applied to Muslim men of religion. These were in time, and in defiance of early tradition and precept, professionalized, and thus became a clergy in a sociological sense. They did not become a clergy in the theological sense. Islam recognizes no ordination, no sacraments, no priestly mediation between the believer and God. The so-called clergyman is perceived as a teacher, a guide, a scholar in theology and law, but not as a priest." Nonetheless, and perhaps inevitably, something like a church and a clergy has emerged, at least functionally. In the Ottoman Empire, for instance, the government appointed a Chief Mufti who exercised ecclesiastical jurisdiction, so to speak, over a city. "One sees it even more dramatically," Lewis writes, "in the ayatollahs of Iran, a title dating from quite modern times and unknown to classical Islamic history. If the rulers of the Islamic Republic but knew it, what they are doing is Christianizing Islam in an institutional sense, though not of course in any religious sense. They have already endowed Iran with the functional equivalents of a pontificate, a college of cardinals, a bench of bishops, and, especially, an inquisition, all previously alien to Islam." Because the implied distinction of

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sovereignties has no secure basis in Islamic thought, this is a very fragile innovation and is subject to challenge by monistic purists.

Making Laws, Making Music

In Islam, the law is already given. At least theoretically, there is no place for debate or legislation. All that is required is submission (submission being, of course, the meaning of the word "Islam"). In the first account we have of a Muslim visiting the British House of Commons in the eighteenth century, the writer expresses his astonishment at the sorry fate of a people who, unlike the Muslims, did not have a divinely revealed law, "and were therefore reduced to the pitiable expedient of enacting their own laws." The monism of Islam, Lewis suggests, is also evident in its aversion to polyphonic music. In polyphony, voices and instruments—whether in duets, trios, or full orchestra—are "following different routes in a common purpose." "Different performers play together, from different scores, producing a result that is greater than the sum of its parts."

Lewis has an extended excursus on this musical dimension of "the difference" between East and West, and, whether or not one finds his explanation entirely convincing, there is no denying that Western music is not well received in the Middle East. "To this very day the Middle East—with the exception of some Westernized enclaves—remains a blank on the itinerary of the great international virtuosos as they go on their world tours." They are celebrated almost everywhere—even in Japan, China, and India—except in the Middle East. Maybe polyphony is the key, or maybe it is part of a more general aversion to Western culture, "tainted" as it is by Christianity. The Christian West is curious about, and eager to welcome, other cultural traditions. Witness the magnificent Islamic holdings in any Western museum or library of note. Throughout the huge swath of the world dominated by Islam, there are no comparable holdings of Western art, music, or literature, never mind of philosophy or theology. It would seem that the Arab world in particular really is, in the phrase of David Pryce-Jones, a "closed circle."

The conclusion of *What Went Wrong?* is grim. After its millennium-long roll of conquest and great cultural achievement, the Muslim world fell further and further behind. Its consolidation in the Ottoman Empire fell apart after choosing the wrong side in the First World War, and the subsequent hegemony of the British and French, and now of the Americans, has left Islam seething with resentments. "Worst of all is the political result," says Lewis. "The long quest for freedom has left a string of shabby tyrannies, ranging from traditional autocracies to new-style dictatorships, modern only in their apparatus of repression and indoctrination." The question asked by Muslims is "Who did this to us?" rather than "What did we do wrong?" A few people, however, are beginning to ask the second question, Lewis writes, and in that there is a glimmer of hope. But it is only a glimmer. Lewis concludes with this:

> If the peoples of the Middle East continue on their present path, the suicide bomber may become a metaphor for the whole region, and there will be no escape from a downward spiral of hate and spite, rage and self-pity, poverty and oppression, culminating sooner or later in yet another alien domination; perhaps from a new Europe reverting to old ways, perhaps from a resurgent Russia, perhaps from some new, expanding superpower in the East. If they can abandon grievance and victimhood, settle their differences, and join their talents, energies, and resources in a common creative endeavor, they can once again make the Middle East, in modern times as it was in antiquity and in the Middle Ages, a major center of civilization. For the time being, the choice is their own.

If. . . . It seems a wan hope, but hope we must. The better part of wisdom, it would seem, is to hope for the best and prepare for the worst.

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HOMOSEXUALITY AND ABUSE

A reader in Princeton, New Jersey, says we are "pandering to anti-Catholic hysteria" by even paying attention to priestly sexual scandals. "Remember the maxim that the Church thinks in terms of centuries. Ignore it and it will go away." No, I don't think it will go away anytime soon. And the questions now raised should not go away anytime soon. But one may hope that hysteria will, in time, give way to more careful deliberation. Such deliberation is offered by Philip Jenkins, Distinguished Professor of History and Religious Studies at Pennsylvania State University, who has been studying issues such as child pornography and clergy abuse for many years. Jenkins, who is not a Catholic, notes that there is nothing specifically Catholic about the sexual abuse of children. Every denomination and religious group has its share of

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abuse cases, "and some of the worst involve non-Catholics." For many reasons, some of them related to anti-Catholicism, the Catholic Church gets the public attention.

Nor, as many allege, is celibacy the problem. "My research of cases over the past twenty years indicates no evidence whatever that Catholic or other celibate clergy are any more likely to be involved in misconduct or abuse than clergy of any other denomination—or indeed, than non-clergy. However determined news media may be to see this affair as a crisis of celibacy, the charge is just unsupported." But what is the incidence of abuse by Catholic priests? Jenkins writes, "Just to find some solid numbers, how many Catholic clergy are involved in misconduct? We actually have some good information on this issue, since in the early 1990s the Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago undertook a bold and thorough self-study. The survey examined every priest who had served in the archdiocese over the previous forty years, some 2,200 individuals, and reopened every internal complaint ever made against these men. The standard of evidence applied was not legal proof that would stand up in a court of law, but just the consensus that a particular charge was probably justified. By this low standard, the survey found that about forty priests, about 1.8 percent of the whole, were probably guilty of misconduct with minors at some point in their careers. Put another way, no evidence existed against about 98 percent of parish clergy, the overwhelming majority of the group. Since other organizations dealing with children have not undertaken such comprehensive studies, we have no idea whether the Catholic figure is better or worse than the rate for schoolteachers, residential home counselors, social workers, or scout masters."

Jenkins cautions against the careless use of the word "pedophilia," which is a psychiatric term meaning sexual interest in children below the age of puberty. "But the vast majority of clergy misconduct cases are nothing like this. The vast majority of instances involve priests who have been sexually active with a person below the age of sexual consent, often sixteen or seventeen years old, or even older. An act of this sort is wrong on multiple counts: it is probably criminal, and by common consent it is immoral and sinful; yet it does not have the utterly ruthless, exploitative character of child molestation. In almost all cases too, with the older teenagers, there is an element of consent."

A man who desires to have sex with an eighteen-year-old boy is ordinarily described as homosexual. The very mention of this obvious fact is condemned as "homophobic" by some gay activists. The press keeps talking about pedophilia when, in fact, that is not the chief problem. According to some experts, real pedophiles are as frequently heterosexual. Of the many true or alleged cases of abuse that have come to light, only a tiny fraction involve pedophilia. The rest have to do with men having sex with teenage boys. But to suggest that homosexuality is the problem is to go up against powerfully influential gay advocacy that homosexuals are no threat to children and therefore should be permitted to adopt, to be Boy Scout leaders, etc., etc. Of course there are homosexuals in the priesthood, which is to say men with dominantly same-sex desires. I don't know how many, nor, I expect, does anyone else. I have read guesstimates of 50 percent, and others putting the figure at 10 percent. On the basis of years of interaction with hundreds of priests, I wouldn't be surprised if the latter figure is about right.

If it is as high as 10 percent, it would seem that the great majority of those are fine priests who are faithful to their vow of celibacy. There are gay advocates urging that faithful priests with a same-sex orientation should "come out of the closet," thus giving the lie to the claim that homosexuals pose a threat to young people. That does not seem like a very good idea. Should the overwhelming majority of priests who are heterosexual then publicly declare their orientation? Catholics are not expected to declare their temptations in public. And homosexual priests coming out of the closet can only focus further attention on the minority that is, in fact, at the heart of the current scandals. That is the bind in which the media and gay advocates are caught. The more they press the sex-abuse scandals, the more attention turns to homosexuality in the priesthood, and to behaviors associated with homosexuality more generally. That is one reason why the current level of public sensation about priestly scandals is not likely to be sustained. What must be sustained, however, is the now powerfully reinforced sense of urgency about the oversight of priests by bishops and heads of religious orders. Priests of whatever orientation, temptations, or feelings must be held to account. If it was not obvious to some before, it now should be obvious to all that there is no alternative to violations of the vow of celibacy except obedience to the vow of celibacy.

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MULTI-SPEED ECUMENISM

For Protestants and some Orthodox, the ecumenical movement began with the Edinburgh Missionary Conference in 1910. For Catholics and the general public, it dates from the Second Vatican Council some forty years ago. I say it began then for the general

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public because, until then, it was no big news that Protestants were getting together, whereas friendlier relations between Catholics and Protestants struck most people as a very dramatic change, and it was that. But what about the future of ecumenism? That question is addressed by Walter Cardinal Kasper, now head of the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity. "To a certain degree," he said, "the crisis of the ecumenical movement is the consequence of its success. . . . The more we come closer to one another, the more painful is the experience of not yet being in full communion among ourselves, which creates a certain dissatisfaction and frustration."

The other side of that, of course, is that many Christians lack a deep ecclesiology or doctrine of the Church that requires full communion, as in *communio* with Christ and his Body the Church. For them, friendlier relations was the goal of ecumenism, and that goal has been more or less achieved. In his address, published in the Italian biweekly *Il Regno*, Kasper notes that "the new generation of faithful and priests has not lived through the council and does not understand how things have changed." For them, ecumenism is old hat; certainly it does not have the cutting edge excitement of even twenty years ago. Moreover, the results of the many ecumenical dialogues, says Kasper, "have yet to penetrate the heart and flesh of our church and of the other churches." This is known as the problem of "reception." It is one thing for theologians to arrive at breakthrough agreements, and quite another for such agreements to make a difference in the life of the several communions.

The situation with the Orthodox, says Kasper, is grim. "We are increasingly conscious of the fact that an Orthodox Church does not really exist. At the present stage, it does not seem that Constantinople is yet capable of integrating the different autocephalous Orthodox churches. There are doubts about its primacy of honor, especially in Moscow." In a conversation with an ecumenical veteran in Rome a couple of years ago, I was told that the most important thing he had learned over years of working with the Orthodox is that they do not have anything like a Catholic understanding of "the universal Church." In theory they do, of course, but not in practice. And in both theory and practice, he added, they do not reciprocate our recognition of their ecclesial fullness. Vatican II very deliberately did not say that the Church of Jesus Christ is (*est*) the Catholic Church but that it subsists in (*subsistet in*) the Catholic Church. There has been no comparable development in Orthodoxy, he noted. In addition, it is not a simple matter of going back to the formal division between East and West of 1054. As one ecumenical theologian puts it, "A thousand years is, after all, a thousand years, and not being in communion with Rome has become a constitutive part of the self-understanding of Orthodoxy."

At Georgetown University in 1998, Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople flatly declared that the Orthodox have an "ontologically different experience of the Church." Ontological differences, one notes, are not easily overcome; and it may be that, by definition, they are not resolvable. In his address, Kasper says that relations with the Greek Orthodox have improved since the Pope's visit there last year, and "in the Middle East, in the territory of the ancient See of Antioch, the situation is completely different, and there already is almost full communion." The unhappy truth, however, is that probably most Orthodox in the world do not believe that Catholics, never mind Protestants, are even validly baptized.

The larger ecumenical circumstance is further complicated by the fact that theological dialogues with the mainline/oldline Protestant churches have not yet required institutional changes. As the dialogues move on to questions of ecclesiology—including apostolic order and the Petrine ministry exercised by the Bishop of Rome—agreements may run into institutional inertia on all sides. Then too, the mainline/oldline is a declining phenomenon, and ecumenism must now engage the evangelicals and pentecostals who are, far and away, the largest and fastest growing part of non-Catholic Christianity. Nor can it be forgotten that, especially with the mainline/oldline, some of the most divisive questions today have to do with moral issues such as abortion, homosexuality, and marriage. That was a point "controversially" touched on by John Paul II on his first visit to the U.S. in 1979, and thirteen years later it is even more urgent. This leads some to say that dialogue with the oldline will increasingly require a theologically serious engagement with Christian anthropology, man created in the image of God, male/female differences, and what John Paul II calls "the theology of the body."

In his address, Kasper concludes that ecumenism in the years ahead will have to move at different "speeds." "There is no realistic alternative," he says. Orthodoxy, the oldline, the evangelical/pentecostal insurgency—and each of them engaged in their own internal developments—have all complicated the ecumenical play in unprecedented ways. But as John Paul II has repeatedly declared, the Catholic Church's commitment to ecumenism is "irreversible," and it may well be that, with so many unpredictable factors, the cutting-edge excitements of forty years ago will be seen as but the prelude to excitements to come.

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Israel and Anti-Semitism

There are some questions of which we may be exceedingly weary, but they will not go away. Such a question is, What is anti-Semitism? Hillel Halkin, an Israeli essayist, comes back to it in *Commentary* under the title "The Return of Anti-Semitism." His thesis is starkly stated: "One must not give an inch on this point. The new anti-Israelism is nothing but the old anti-Semitism in disguise." He cites the UN "conference against racism" in Durban, South Africa, last summer, and rightly notes that the nations of the world solemnly assembled to tacitly, and sometimes explicitly, affirm the notorious formula that "Zionism is racism." (To its credit, the U.S. withdrew from the conference in protest.) He also cites mainly anecdotal, but deeply ominous, indications that in Europe today it is becoming increasingly "respectable" not only to deride Israel but also to make overtly anti-Semitic remarks in public.

But then he takes his argument a step too far. "One cannot be against Israel or Zionism, as opposed to this or that Israeli policy or Zionist position, without being anti-Semitic. Israel is the state of the Jews. Zionism is the belief that Jews should have a state. To defame Israel is to defame the Jews. To wish it never existed, or would cease to exist, is to wish to destroy the Jews." Drawing an analogy, Halkin writes that "only an anti-Semite can think the world would be better off without Israel, just as only a Francophobe can think the world would be better off without France."

Not quite. To be French is inexplicable apart from France. Jews and Judaism, by way of contrast, had a clear identity long before the establishment of the State of Israel only fifty-four years ago. The Zionist belief that Jews should have a state was, until World War II, rejected by most of the world's Jews. To "wish it never existed," to believe that the establishment of Israel was a mistake, is certainly not the same as "to wish to destroy the Jews." It is, rather, a matter of making a historical and moral judgment that the wrong thing was done. One may disagree with those who have arrived at that judgment without accusing them of wanting to destroy the Jews. Some of them argue that it is precisely the establishment of the State of Israel that is putting so many Jewish lives at stake.

To wish that Israel "would cease to exist" is something else. But even that is not necessarily a wish to destroy the Jews, since one might at the same time hope that the minority of the world's Jews living in Israel would find a secure home elsewhere, notably in the U.S. Halkin admits that Zionism was wrong about one very important thing. It was thought that providing Jews with a homeland would be the end of anti-Semitism, since anti-Semitism could not exist without Jews. "Today we know that it *can* exist without Jews, or at least without focusing on them—and precisely because there is a Jewish homeland to represent them. But admitting this is tantamount to admitting that Zionism has failed in a central objective," Halkin writes. Which returns him to the central claim that "the new anti-Israelism is nothing but the old anti-Semitism in disguise."

Trivial and Non-trivial Pursuits

There is no doubt that much that is aptly described as anti-Israelism is inseparably admixed with anti-Semitism, and not only in its Arab and Muslim expression. But it is, I believe, a grave mistake to equate criticism of Israel with anti-Semitism. Halkin quotes a 1992 article by Norman Podhoretz, "What is Anti-Semitism?", in which Podhoretz wrote, "All criticisms of Israel based on a double standard, rooted as this is in the ancient traditions of anti-Semitic propaganda, deserve to be stigmatized as anti-Semitic." Certainly one wants to reject double standards. At the same time, there is much that is unique to Israel. Halkin acknowledges as much in discussing American support for Israel: "Support for Israel, which is difficult to justify on cold grounds of national interest, ultimately depends on broad public backing—and this is especially true of the United States, where such support entails not only large sums of money but also, more than ever since September 11, large perceived risks. The potential for slippage in the willingness to pay a price for this friendship, should Israel be seen as morally undeserving of it, is there. And at this juncture in history, the moral undermining of Israel is anti-Semitism's primary goal. Compared to it, such arcane pursuits as Holocaust denial are trivial. Only the isolation of Israel to the point that it might one day have to stand alone against enemies stronger than it can possibly lead to another Jewish catastrophe."

Precisely. Ninety-eight percent of Americans are not Jewish, and the great majority of them strongly support Israel for explicitly moral reasons, and those moral reasons are inseparable from a religious and theological understanding of the bond between Judaism and Christianity. It is therefore hard to understand why so many Jews and Jewish publications—*Commentary* very much included—are preoccupied with trivial pursuits such as the fringe phenomenon of Holocaust denial, and with emphatically non-trivial pursuits such as attacks on Pius XII and the Catholic Church, and on serious Jewish-Christian theological dialogue. Such unremitting attacks—which in some cases, such as

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Daniel Goldhagen and Leon Wieseltier in the *New Republic*, are of a viciously anti-Christian character—can do nothing to enhance "broad public backing" for Israel or positive attitudes toward Jews and Judaism.

During the Cold War, many made the argument that U.S. support for Israel was justified on the basis of what Halkin calls "cold grounds of national interest." Israel, it was repeatedly said, is the only democracy and the only reliable friend of the U.S. in that part of the world. The Cold War is over. Today, almost nobody tries to argue that, for the U.S., the tie with Israel is more of an asset than a burden. Most Americans are prepared to bear that burden, and one must hope that will continue to be the case. Toward that end, it is not helpful to suggest that support for Israel requires conversion to Zionist ideology, or that doubts about the wisdom and justice of Israel's establishment in 1948 are tantamount to the desire to destroy the Jews, or that criticism of Israel is "but the old anti-Semitism in disguise." Hillel Halkin is certainly right in saying that, after September 11, the perceived risks in U.S. support for Israel are greatly increased. There needs to be a civil conversation about why we should be prepared to accept those risks. It is distinctly unhelpful to poison public discourse with the suggestion that those who disagree or have doubts are, in fact, simply anti-Semites.

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WHILE WE'RE AT IT

■ Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Wales, is being touted as the likely successor to George Carey as Archbishop of Canterbury. In the *Times Literary Supplement*, Arnold Hunt reviews a book edited by Williams and others, *Love's Redeeming Work*, and has this to say: "The defining mood of Anglicanism is a conservative skepticism, self-critical rather than iconoclastic, striking a 'note of sobriety and penitence, of realism interwoven with reticence and indirectness born of gratitude or wonder,' and finding its most characteristic expression in a language of 'concentrated but unhurried delight.' This is some way away from the classical Anglican triad of Scripture, reason and tradition, let alone the Thirty-Nine Articles; and it signals a shift away from a purely doctrinal or dogmatic definition of Anglicanism to something more subjective and elusive: an Anglican attitude rather than an Anglican orthodoxy. It is a deeply attractive vision of Anglicanism. . . . Yet there are considerable difficulties in applying it retrospectively to the Anglican tradition of the past five centuries." I have mentioned before a conversation of some years ago with another archbishop in which I asked him how he would define the mission of the Church of England. After some hesitation, he opined, "I suppose it might be to keep alive the Christian alternative for people who are interested in that sort of thing." It is perhaps too easy to make fun of the C of E, and the English are very practiced in doing just that. The truth is that I would wonder about anyone who has never felt the attractiveness of Anglicanism. It may well be argued that no other communion has provided a spiritual ambiance of such gentility, combining aesthetic appeal and intellectual nuance. The "Anglican attitude" is undoubtedly a winsome way of being Christian. It is also ethnocentric, vestigial, and averse to the truth claims, disciplines, and passions that make for mission. The more vibrant, orthodox, and missionary Anglicanism of Africa and Asia is now making a bid to transform the Anglican communion. One watches with considerable interest to see whether such a transformation is compatible with maintaining what Arnold Hunt and many others admire, not without ambivalence, in the "Anglican attitude."

■ For a prognosis somewhat more hopeful than is usually found among serious scholars, see Graham E. Fuller's "The Future of Political Islam" in *Foreign Affairs*. Political Islam, or Islamism, is frequently a democratizing force, says Fuller, which uses religion, sometimes in its extreme expression, to challenge the corrupt regimes dominating almost all Muslim societies. Perhaps so, but his argument would be somewhat more persuasive if backed up with examples. In Saudi Arabia, for instance, Wahhabism is, to put it gently, not markedly democratic, and the ruling princes buy it off by lavish funding of its terrorist purposes. In any event, Fuller's argument leads him to this more general conclusion: "Most great religions have elements of both tolerance and intolerance built into them: intolerance because they believe they carry the truth, perhaps the sole truth, and tolerance because they also speak of humanity, the common origins of mankind, concepts of divine justice, and a humane order for all. Violence does not flow from religion alone—even bigoted religion. After all, the greatest horrors and killing machines in history stemmed from the Western, secular ideologies of fascism and communism. Religion is not about to vanish from the face of the earth, even in the most advanced Western nations, and certainly not in the Islamic world. The West will have to deal with this reality and help open up these embittered societies. In

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the process, the multiple varieties of Islam—the key political realities of today—will either evolve in positive directions with popular support, or else be discredited when they deliver little but venom. Muslim publics will quickly know the difference when offered a choice." He's right, of course, about the bloody history of militant secularism in modern times. But his conclusion reflects a common confusion abut the connection between truth and tolerance. If they are pitted against one another, truth—whether religious, philosophical, or ideological—will always be a threat to tolerance, and vice versa. Tolerance will never be secure unless people believe that it is an imperative demanded by what they acknowledge as the commanding claims of truth. Still today—and, indeed, increasingly today—those claims are carried by religion. For Christians, with relatively few exceptions, tolerance is affirmed because of, not despite, religious truth. Although secularists find it almost impossible to understand, the apparent paradox is that it is the "sole truth" of Christianity that requires the acknowledgment of universal truths such as "the common origins of mankind, concepts of divine justice, and a humane order for all." In other words, the humanly universal is discerned and affirmed through the religiously particular. A more hopeful view of Islam and Islamism must not be based on the prospect of secularization or the expectation that Islam will become less Islamic. Tolerance and other aspects of modernity can be secured in Muslim societies only by the truth that Islam claims to carry. Whether, in fact, Islam is capable of religiously legitimating tolerance and other necessary goods is, of course, one of the most important and unsettling questions of our time.

■ The rule was quite clear. The *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (USA) specified that ordained leaders were "to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman, or chastity in singleness." Last year, PCUSA's General Assembly voted to delete that language, allowing single homosexuals and those involved in same-sex unions to be ordained. The change had to be approved by a majority of 173 presbyteries around the country, and by early this year it was clear that it had been rejected, and massively so. A similar proposal for change in 1997 was defeated 114 to 57, and this time around it is projected that the final vote will be 124 to 49 against the revision. The vote has, of course, greatly cheered conservatives in PCUSA. At the same time, the denomination's highest judiciary had earlier ruled that congregations could conduct blessings of same-sex unions, so long as they are not called marriages. That ruling was upheld by a 58 percent vote of the presbyteries. Gay advocates understandably ask why, if people are living in a morally acceptable and, indeed, blessed relationship, they should be deemed unqualified for ordained leadership. So it would seem PCUSA still has some work to do in putting its *Book of Order* into moral and theological order.

■ One does not ordinarily expect rarefied theological dispute over listings in the telephone directory. But the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC), which has offices all over the country, is pressing phone companies not to list messianic Jewish congregations under "synagogues." Says Philip Abramowitz, director of the New York JCRC Taskforce on Missionaries and Cults (that's NYJCRCTMC), "These people are becoming more brazen." Messianic Jews, says the *Forward*, the New York-based Jewish paper, "observe some Jewish customs but also deify Jesus." Well, not quite. Like other Christians, they believe he really is true God and true man. Jews are not united in the telephone book campaign. Rabbi Avi Shafran of Agudath Israel, a very Orthodox group, says that the very liberal Reconstructionist movement and groups such as the Society for Humanistic Judaism should not be permitted to advertise themselves as Jewish. "The Jewish community draws the line at messianic [Jews]." "Why?" he asks. "Why is that the line? Is Judaism just the rejection of Jesus? It's unfortunate that that's the way the Jewish world sees Judaism." The argument among Jews as to whether Jesus is or is not the Messiah has been going on for almost two thousand years. I expect that Peter, Paul, and, for that matter, Maimonides would be surprised that so many centuries later some Jews are asking the telephone companies to decide the question.

■ I don't know whether the gods are getting ready to destroy them, but they've sure done something funny to their minds. Here is Julie Bosman writing in the *New Republic*: "As Cass Sunstein, the University of Chicago constitutional law expert, notes, giving legal protection to a fetus doesn't undermine *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 decision establishing abortion rights in America. 'I don't think it gives any ammunition to the critics of *Roe*. If the state says that it's a crime to kill an unborn fetus, that doesn't do anything to intrude. *Roe v. Wade* doesn't say that fetuses can't receive legal protection.' Indeed, a number of states already have laws protecting unborn children. But those laws haven't led to the arrest and imprisonment of doctors performing abortions or women seeking them. Rather, it has merely led to murder and manslaughter convictions for people who attack pregnant women, an outcome in which most people can find certain satisfaction. 'Many people who want *Roe* to remain on

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the books agree that it's important for the state to protect unborn children,' Sunstein says. 'There's no necessary conflict between concern for unborn kids and the commitment to freedom of choice for the mother.'" Now let's see if we've got this right. There is no conflict between the state saying it is a crime to kill unborn babies and the state saying it is all right to kill unborn babies. Or maybe the key word here is "necessary." Or maybe . . . oh, forget it.

■ Here's another column, this one by E. J. Dionne in the *Washington Post*, about Catholic priests being so embarrassed by the sexual-abuse scandals that they no longer wear their Roman collar in public. To put it delicately, that is wimpish wrongheadedness of grotesque proportions. Sure, some bad priests have brought disgrace upon the Church. So what else is new? We should not be complicit in letting that small minority of miscreants define the public presentation of the priesthood. In another column, a priest is quoted as saying that the scandal has discredited the Church's teaching on sexuality. Quite the opposite is the case. As Father C. John McCloskey of Washington says in a letter to the *New York Times*, appearing the same day as Dionne's column, if the wayward priests had lived according to the Church's teaching, there would be no scandal. This is not a time for craven retreat but for unfurling the flag, and wearing the collar is one small way of doing that. Each day on the streets of New York, I encounter hundreds of people who greet a priest with friendly respect. Who knows what they're really thinking? Perhaps their smiles hide suspicion or even contempt. I doubt it, but it is no matter. This is who I am, one who bears the immeasurable honor of being, all undeserving, a priest of Christ and his Church. There are few things so shameful or sinfully presumptuous as a priest who is ashamed of the Church. The question is not whether she is worthy of us but whether we are worthy of her. Allegiance is tested only when it exacts a price. This is no time for self-pity and whining about being misunderstood. When the earthiness of the vessels is on such embarrassing public display, all the more is the need for bold identification with the treasure, bearing witness to the truth that "the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us" (2 Corinthians 4:7). So there. End of homily for the day.

■ Oops. In the March issue I said that, since John O'Sullivan left as editor, *National Review* had pretty much dropped the question of immigration policy. I sit corrected. It has been pointed out to me that the issue has been regularly addressed in the pages of *NR*, although not so regularly as under O'Sullivan's editorship. For instance, *NR* gave major attention to the very Christopher Jencks article in the *New York Review of Books* that was the occasion for my comment. This, I am told, is a sensitive point at *NR* because both the "immigration reform" and the "abolish national borders" parties claim that *NR* has lost its nerve on the immigration question, and it ain't so. *NR* lose its nerve? Get real.

■ "One Nation Under Many Gods" (Public Square, October 2001) was an extended reflection on the many meanings of "religious pluralism" in America, occasioned by the book *A New Religious America* by Diane Eck of Harvard. Among my points in that reflection was that America remains an overwhelmingly Christian society, which, needless to say, is not without its problems. Now the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago has rendered a useful service by pulling together the numbers. Aside from Christianity and Judaism, the three largest religious groups in the U.S. are Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. In the 1970s, these three accounted for a little under 1 percent of the American population, and the best estimate today is that they are 2.4 percent. The three make up about half of all those following religions other than Christianity and Judaism. The other half is made up of religions so numerous and so minuscule that it would be impossible to list them. Top among these other groups are Native American religions, pagans and witches/Wiccans, and followers of what are described as "personal" religions, each of these having about 0.1 percent of the population. Using its own data and that collected by others, NORC's best estimate is that there are about 1.4 million adult Muslims, or a total population of 1.9 Muslims, in the country. The report offers some analysis of why the presence of non-Christian and non-Jewish religions is so frequently exaggerated in the media and elsewhere. For instance, "New temples, celebrity converts to Buddhism, turbaned Sikhs, and visits by the Dalai Lama have all created an impression of prominence beyond the actual size of these groups." A second reason is that so many Americans have come in contact with aspects of Hinduism and Buddhism through Transcendental Meditation, New Age fashions, and practices such as yoga and meditation. A reason for the exaggeration that is not mentioned is that media attention is focused in parts of the country, New York City, for example, where religio-ethnic diversity is on inescapable display. Yet another unmentioned reason is that so many champions of multiculturalism—Diane Eck, for example—desperately *want* American society to fit their idea of "religious pluralism." For some of them, as well as others, the exaggeration also serves the purpose of challenging the Judeo-Christian

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"hegemony" and opposing the "privileging" of Judaism and Christianity in our public life. The NORC study is an important reminder that we cannot escape the problems, ambiguities, and opportunities implicated in our being at present, as in the past and in the foreseeable future, "Christian America."

■ In the department of things that only an intellectual could believe is an article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* titled, "The BBC: How to be Impartial in Wartime." Anthony Collings, former *Newsweek* bureau chief in London, holds up the BBC as a model in contrast to "the cramped and jingoistic bias" of the American media. He notes, for example, that in speaking about terrorists the BBC prefers the term "attackers." Why, of course. The bin Laden gang "attacks" the World Trade Center and the Bush gang "attacks" the bin Laden gang. They are both attackers. The delusion of moral symmetry has a long and dishonorable pedigree. During the Cold War years, those who were "impartial" in the conflict between the evil empire and the free world were rightly compared to a fellow who saw someone push an old lady into the way of an oncoming bus and someone else who pushed an old lady out of the way of an oncoming bus. "What's the difference?" he opined. "They both push old ladies around." News reporting should be honest and truthful, to be sure. But, between the world of al-Qaeda and the West they have vowed to destroy, what is there to be impartial about?

■ "As God Intended" is an article by a San Francisco therapist and graduate of a Jesuit high school. Writing in *America*, the Jesuit weekly, he reports on being invited back to the school as a homosexual to speak about his experience there. "The head of the school asked me to say what I had needed to hear at Prep in 1963 and what gay Prepsters need to hear today. I believe they need to hear three things. First: you are created exactly as God intended you to be. Second: you are not damaged goods, neither sick, nor evil. Third: you and the love you provide are essential, mysterious graces in God's plan for the world." In other words: God is responsible for the way I am; my sexuality is untouched by human sinfulness; the way I express my sexuality is in accord with God's will. His advice to the school is quite simple: it should teach that he is right and the Church is wrong about human sexuality. The editors do not say that Jesuit educators should accept the advice, but obviously think they need to hear it. Perhaps it is just as well not to speculate about why they think that. Surely it cannot be because they think Jesuit educators are not aware that there are people who reject the teaching of the Catholic Church. Jesuits do not lead such sheltered lives as that, even when their society is limited to other Jesuits.

■ In deciding what does and does not count as defamation, Catholics, and Christians more generally, frequently claim that media or artistic attacks aimed at them would never be tolerated if aimed at Jews or blacks. It is an often legitimate although somewhat tired complaint. Here is a different twist. New York City's Jewish Museum is sponsoring an exhibit, "Mirroring Evil: Nazi Imagery/Recent Art." It is very "creative," including "designer" poison-gas canisters, cute concentration camps made with Lego sets, and a campy photographer holding a Diet Coke as he stands among skeletal survivors at Buchenwald. An organization of Holocaust survivors has called for a boycott of the exhibit, and it is seconded by the Catholic League. Good for both of them. Trivializing the Holocaust is obscene, and anyone to whom that has to be explained would not understand. What is deemed to be the cutting edge of "the artistic community" is increasingly an awful bore. The goal, obsessively pursued, is to be "transgressive." Creativity and artistic courage consist in giving the finger to any piety, convention, or authority figure suspected of being respected by the less talented masses. What is respectfully, even reverently, referred to as "the arts" by the uncritical critics of the cutting edge is little more than a sustained snit of adolescent rebellion. So what else is new? As has been said, everything changes except the avant garde. Now the Jewish Museum presents the equivalent of "Yeah, yeah, yeah, so what's the big deal about Auschwitz?" My, but aren't they the clever ones. In response to the protests, the museum has put the controverted items in a separate room, with a sign indicating that some viewers might find them offensive. That should draw the crowds.

■ Keep it simple, stupid. The admonition is frequently in order, especially when simplifying does not result in the simplistic. "Why Marriage Matters: Twenty-One Conclusions from the Social Sciences" is simple without being simplistic, and it comes with ample footnotes for those with a penchant for nuances. Put together by thirteen distinguished scholars of marriage and the family, the twenty-five page booklet is ideal for classrooms and discussion groups and is available from the Institute for American Values at 1841 Broadway, New York, New York 10023 or its website, www.americanvalues.org. Granted, the findings cited in favor of marriage do not deal with the deepest levels of spiritual fulfillment, but they do appeal to self-interest, rightly understood. For instance, keeping kids out of jail and off drugs; helping them do well in school and get good jobs; reducing

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litigation and miseries such as suicide among parents; and so forth. Those may not be the highest ends in life, but they're pretty good.

■ Tunku Varadarajan, an editor with the *Wall Street Journal*, attended a meeting in Istanbul between the foreign ministers of the European Union and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the latter being, he notes, "the only international organization of states defined purely in terms of religion." The meeting, he thought, was a farce, with the Europeans declaring how wonderfully peaceful and humane Islam is, and the Muslims warmly agreeing. He quotes Amre Moussa, Secretary General of the League of Arab States, who said that "the people who carried out the Sept. 11 attack do not represent Islam, just as the Baader Meinhof doesn't represent Germany or the Red Brigade Italy." Varadarajan observes, "Neither group claimed to speak for Germany or Italy in the way that al-Qaeda claims to speak for Islam. Yet this point was lost on Mr. Moussa, and this failure of analogical reasoning, so common among so many Muslim interlocutors, is part of a general intellectual calamity in the Islamic world. That world, with the valiant exception of Turkey, has yet to graduate from self-pity to self-criticism, and unless its spokesmen and thinkers are able to know themselves, there is no hope that they may ever be able to know the West." In the Islamic world, only Turkey has embraced the ways of the West, and Mr. Varadarajan is full of praise for the fact that the Istanbul conference was sponsored in part by a Turkish winemaker and brewery, and that the Turkish imam he met wore a pinstripe Western suit and only the slightest trace of a beard. The way of Kemal Ataturk, who in the 1920s radically secularized Turkey, is the only way for Islamic societies to go, according to Mr. Varadarajan. Ataturk's policy, imposed by the military to this day, is to create a naked public square in which the religio-cultural influence of Islam is coercively confined to what is defined as the private sphere of life. As some of us have been arguing for many years, the goal in a just and democratic society is not a naked public square and not a sacred public square but a civil public square. Almost all Muslims, supported, it would seem, by their authoritative texts, believe that Islam mandates a sacred public square. Outside of Turkey, as Bernard Lewis and other scholars have explained at length, there is determined opposition to the kind of naked public square imposed by Ataturk and his military successors. Lewis was at the Istanbul conference and said that "there are many civilizations and have been through history, but there's only one modernity." Mr. Varadarajan thought nobody was listening to him. One has to hope that he is wrong. One has to hope that there are thinkers and political leaders within the Islamic world who can, in the decades ahead, find an authentically Islamic way of legitimating modernity. Until now, the assumption has been that secularization is a necessary condition of modernity. Indeed, many thinkers have come close to equating the two. It seems safe to say that, if the only choice is between a naked public square and a sacred public square, Muslims will, with near unanimity, choose the sacred public square. The great new fact of our time—in the Islamic world, in Africa, in Asia, in Latin America, and almost everywhere else except Western Europe—is the *de*secularization of world history. A much neglected aspect of globalization is the global search for ways of embracing modernity on religious terms. Nowhere is that search more urgent—with enormous stakes for all of us—than in the world of Islam. Kemal Ataturk is historically interesting, and wine-bibbing imams may be charming, but they do not represent a believable way for Islamic societies to secure a civil public square.

■ Almost half a century ago, Episcopal Bishop (as distinct from a non-episcopal bishop) James Pike and Eugene Carson Blake, Presbyterian, said there was not a doctrine's worth of difference among the several Protestant denominations and so they should all get together. Thus was born the Consultation on Church Union (COCU), which many people wrongly thought had gone out of business ages ago. As of this year, COCU is CUIC—Churches Uniting in Christ, which they hope to do by the year 2007. The CUIC members include the African Methodist Episcopal Church, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, Episcopal Church USA, International Council of Community Churches, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), United Church of Christ, and United Methodist Church. The constituting vision of CUIC includes a commitment to ongoing dialogue to "deepen the participating churches' understanding of racism." Lest there be any misunderstanding, the statement says that the purpose of such deepened understanding of racism is "in order to make a more compelling case against it." It says here that a chief obstacle to the merger of the nine bodies is disagreement on ordained ministry, specifically on the meaning of "bishop" (cf. above aside on "non-episcopal bishop"). It is possible we may be hearing more about all of this, so you might want to go to your Rolodex or database and change COCU to CUIC. On the other hand, if you have never bothered to enter COCU, you might want to wait to see whether in the years ahead there are further sightings of CUIC. Acronyms come and go, but denominations denominate the ties that bind.

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■ The best-selling Bible translation in the English-speaking world is the New International Version (NIV). It is the overwhelming favorite among evangelical Protestants. In 1997 there was a very big fuss when it was reported that the International Bible Society, which holds the copyright, and Zondervan, the exclusive publisher, contemplated a "gender inclusive" version of the NIV. As a result of the ruckus, they agreed to cease and desist. But now, lo and behold, *Today's New International Version.* Many evangelical leaders are furious. Here is a statement of protest noting that "evangelical Christians confess the *plenary, verbal inspiration* of Scripture. *Plenary* means 'every,' *verbal* means 'word.' Thus God inspired each of the words of the original text of the Bible, not simply the concepts behind those words." Never mind that plenary actually means full, or that many evangelicals and most other Christians do not subscribe to a "dictation theory" of divine inspiration. TNIV, like some other contemporary translations, does have big problems. For instance, Hebrews 2:6, echoing Psalm 8 and other Old Testament passages, has it, "What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?" TNIV has this: "What are mere mortals that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them?" Apart from the clumsy language, there is a theological distortion in that "son of man" has been understood, from the apostolic era to the present, to be a messianic reference to Christ. Revelation 3:20: "I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me." TNIV: "I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with them, and they with me." The latter is simply grammatically wrong. And what's the point? Does anyone seriously fear that people will think that Jesus does not eat with women? There are numerous other such examples. One need not get worked up to a high dudgeon over theories of biblical inspiration to find repugnant this incessant meddling with texts, aimed at pandering to people who are too sensitive for decent company. And, of course, aimed at selling "new, improved" Bibles that nobody needs.

■ I'm a bit late on this one, but the *New York Times* had a lovely picture of young nuns and a huge crowd of others at the annual March for Life in Washington. The caption read: "*Roe v. Wade*, Pro and Con. People on both sides of the Supreme Court's 1973 ruling that legalized the right to abortion converged in Washington yesterday for the anniversary." Crowd-counters estimated that about 100,000 were in the pro-life march, while ten to fifteen pro-abortion proponents demonstrated in front of the Supreme Court. Some "convergence."

■ Georgetown, a university "in the Jesuit tradition," offers GOVT 463 on "Political Terrorism." Here's the course description: "This course is not about passing moral judgments on terrorism and terrorists. Its first objective is to understand terrorism as an alternative political action that certain people and organizations resort to under certain conditions. Its second objective is to figure out the evolutionary dynamics of terrorism and to answer the most significant question about the terrorist phenomenon: How and why do good people get involved in committing terrible acts? The course tries to reach these objectives through the study of historical cases as well as theoretical discussions. Though short, the course covers terrorist organizations from the French Revolutionaries to September 11, 2001." The phrase "terrible acts" does seem to be edging dangerously close to a moral judgment, although on terrorism, not terrorists. The latter, presumably, are "good people." Do you have any idea what tuition is at Georgetown?

■ It didn't really get my attention until one of our parishioners was arrested and spent a night in jail. The charge? He was drinking beer with his buddies and he is only eighteen years old. Then there was the business of one of the Bush daughters using a phony ID to buy beer, although she didn't go to jail. Why have we been so passive about this cock-eyed business of making twenty-one the legal age for drinking? There are, it seems to me, many things wrong with that, not least the violation of federalism when the national government blackmails the states into raising the drinking age by threatening to cut off federal revenues. Brett Deal of North Carolina writes: "I have lived in several college towns, and the ridiculous consequence of these laws is to burden the college administrations and communities with problems inherent in criminalizing a conduct for three-quarters of the student body that is not criminal for the other 25 percent. It doesn't stop the drinking in the younger group, yet threatens their futures with criminal records or places them in the loving care of the substance-abuse business, which has no reason to put itself out of a job by actually mitigating the problems attendant to drinking. This situation creates a culture in which most college students are instructed that they are not adults. I'm not surprised they often make no attempt to behave as adults. In my more irritable moments, despairing of a return to the eighteen-year-old standard, I have suggested that colleges should try a policy of making twenty-one the minimum age for enrollment; at least the college-

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bound might spend that three years earning some of their own tuition and becoming familiar with the working world." In addition, one might reasonably expect that raising the drinking age increases problem-drinking by moving eighteen-to-twenty-year-olds from bars, where other people can see them, to binge drinking in dorm rooms. But the craziest thing is that young people who are thought to be old enough to enlist in the military and risk dying, and mature enough to exercise their franchise in elections, are deemed to be too irresponsible to buy a beer. Goodness knows, I'm not looking for additional causes, but, if anyone is launching a campaign to change this law, sign me up.

■ On what he describes as the protection and sheltering of priests involved in child molestation, Andrew Sullivan writes, "This was a policy organized in detail, and approved at every level of the church hierarchy. Rome knew. Of course they knew. And they knew what they were doing was evil." That is a very ugly slander, in no way excused by Mr. Sullivan's manifest ignorance of how the Church works. But of course, and once again, the occasion for his being so upset is the Church's teaching on homosexuality, the subject that is, regrettably, the polestar of his journalism. He cites a story in the *New York Times* in which a Vatican official, speaking of homosexuals, is quoted as saying, "People with these inclinations just cannot be ordained." The official, says Sullivan, is using "the ancient slur of associating pedophiles with homosexuals." It is not an ancient slur but an evident connection, when, as in the instances of abuse that have come to public attention, boys are involved, and, when the other sexual activities of the offending priests are known, it turns out that they are homosexual. There may be some exceptions, but that is the general rule. Of course there are priests who have same-sex desires and yet are entirely chaste and faithful to their vow of celibacy. But it is not surprising that disorder breeds disorder, and it is the Church's teaching that homosexuality is "objectively disordered" that drives Mr. Sullivan to such furious distraction. That teaching he labels as "hate and bigotry," and it is why, he says, "I couldn't go to Mass today." In the same piece, he attacks that "reliable Vatican-defender Richard John Neuhaus" and my comments reported in the *Boston Herald*, which he characterizes this way: "Another pernicious trope from the reactionaries is the notion that the pedophile explosion was a function of liberalizing attitudes in the Church after the Second Vatican Council." I did say and do believe that widespread dissent from authoritative teaching on faith and morals—including what was called the acceptance of alternative lifestyles—is related to the laxity that has been only partially remedied under the pontificate of John Paul II. On such matters, it seems to me, people should be able to disagree in a civil manner. In Washington a few days before Mr. Sullivan's attack, he and I publicly debated the connection between religion and violence. I was impressed, and deeply saddened, by his anger at the Church. Not that there is not a good deal to be angry about. But righteous anger is prevented from becoming self-righteous by remembering that we are all disordered in various ways—objectively and subjectively, innocently and culpably. Which is why Christ gave us the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Which is why we prepare for each Mass by saying together, "I confess . . ."

■ It's not as though peccant clerics were unknown in the good old days, but it really is disingenuous of commentators who have promoted sundry revolutions, including the sexual revolution, in the name of "the spirit" of Vatican II to now claim that their promotion has no bearing on the priestly misconduct now so much in the public eye. It is a major factor, as evident in this personal testimony recorded by California journalist George Neumayr: "Psychologist William Coulson knows this well. In the 1960s, he counseled priests and nuns to 'get in touch with their feelings,' as he told me in an interview for a 1997 story in the *San Francisco Faith* newspaper. 'My theories made priests and nuns feel good about being bad.' Working with his mentor Carl Rogers, an icon of the 1960s relativistic nondirective therapy, Coulson conducted 'sensitivity' training and 'self-esteem' workshops for the Jesuit Order and several other religious groups eager to absorb the New Morality. 'Once we began to peel the onion at these workshops, there was no end to the shocking things people would say,' he said. 'They became persuaded of this subjective theory of morality which says that the highest morality is the one you locate within you. And after a while these religious forgot about the teachings of the Church. After our workshop at Alma [the Jesuit seminary then in California], one of the young Jesuits wrote, "Never in my life before that group experience had I experienced *me* so intently." He added, 'The Franciscans were so enamored with our psychology that they introduced it to Saint Anthony's seminary in Santa Barbara. Years later, eleven or twelve friars were accused of molesting thirty-four high school boys. I'm afraid we planted the seeds and they carried the seeds to the next generation and they germinated.' Both Coulson and Rogers later repudiated their relativistic theories. 'I greatly underestimated the reality of evil,' said Rogers. 'I hope Rogerian theory goes down the drain.'"

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■ Before he was Imam Jamil Al-Amin, he was H. Rapp Brown, the 1960s incendiary who persuaded blacks that burning down their neighborhoods was a great revolutionary strategy for overthrowing "Amerika." He has now been convicted in Atlanta of shooting two Fulton County sheriff's deputies, killing one and wounding the other. The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) and eleven other Muslim groups are steadfast in their support of Jamil Al-Amin. Citing prejudice against minorities, they say he was railroaded and will be exonerated on appeal. These are the groups that would persuade us that Muslims are, in the memorable phrase of Mr. Brown, as American as cherry pie.

■ Since moving from Brooklyn to Manhattan many years ago, I have not owned a car. And, if I did have one, it almost certainly wouldn't be one of those huge SUVs. So I have no dog in this fight. Bill McKibben, author of *Maybe One: A Case for Smaller Families* (no doubt a big hit in dying Europe), has an article titled "Driving Global Warming." About the world-destroying threat of global warming he has no doubts. Writing in the *Christian Century*, he says, "If you care about the people in this world living closest to the margins, then you need to do everything in your power to slow the rate at which the planet warms, for they are the most vulnerable. I was naked and you did not clothe me. I was hungry and you drowned me with your Ford Explorer." I knew they had a reputation for flipping, but drowned by a Ford Explorer? That's what the man says. Forget about the war on terrorism. The SUVs are out to do us in. "This," McKibben writes, "is a moral issue every bit as compelling as the civil rights movement of a generation ago, and every bit as demanding of our commitment and our sacrifice. It's not a technical question—it's about desire, status, power, willingness to change, openness to the rest of creation. It can't be left to the experts—the experts have had it for a decade now, and we're pouring ever more carbon into the atmosphere. It's time for all of us to take it on, as uncomfortable as that may be." He adds, "Calling it a moral issue does not mean we need to moralize." Oh, good. For a moment there, I thought he was stepping—not driving, mind you—over the line.

■ The debate went on until after midnight at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society in Colorado Springs, but the resolution rejecting "open theism" finally passed by 70 percent. Open theism—a.k.a. free-will theism—is the teaching that God does not know the future because people shape it through their own decisions, and that's the way God made the world to be. The catholic (also upper case) tradition, of course, affirms God's omniscience, while acknowledging that the Divine epistemology, so to speak, far surpasses what we know about knowing. Irenaeus, Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas, and a host of other worthies have pondered this mystery in depth. Evangelicals are inclined to launch questions from scratch and demand knock-down proofs from explicit biblical passages. In the absence of a Magisterium, or authoritative teaching office, this makes for lively arguments. One proponent of open theism described the vote as the work of the "evangelical Taliban," and said it was laying the groundwork for kicking him and his friends out of the society. The leaders of the society said he should cool it. As to whether the society will kick them out, only God knows.

■ The European Parliament was set to debate a report from its Women's Rights Commission that was vetted also by the Citizens' Liberties and Rights Commission. (The duplication of commissions is simply reflective of the Brussels bureaucracy and should not be taken to mean that women are not citizens.) The report condemns "religious organizations" and "extremist political movements" that are guilty of "the exclusion of women from leading positions in the political and religious hierarchy." Read women priests. The report also deplores "the interference of the churches and religious communities in the public and political life of the state, in particular when such interference is designed to restrict human rights and fundamental freedoms, for instance, in the sexual or reproductive sphere." Read abortion. But the really interesting phrase is "interference . . . in the public and political life of the state." Statist hostility to social pluralism as articulated in, for instance, the Catholic doctrine of subsidiarity is deeply entrenched in the political culture of Europe, and is unquestionably established in the European Union and its Brussels apparat. Mussolini first came up with the formula, "Everything within the State. Nothing against the State. Nothing outside the State." It is still the most useful definition of totalitarianism, which is, in aspiration if not in fact, very much alive in Europe. And not only in Europe. (After some of the more extreme anti-Catholic language was removed, the report was approved, 242-240.)

■ In a review titled "Unpardonable," Robert S. Wistrich once again gives evidence that he is incorrigible. Writing in the *Times Literary Supplement*, he praises David Kertzer's polemic against the papacy, *The Popes Against the Jews*, concluding that Pius XII's alleged silence about the Holocaust "was less the result of any special moral insensitivity than it was a reflection of the long-established and pervasive

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culture of Vatican anti-Semitism." See the discussion of Russell Hittinger's critique of the Kertzer book, in which he devastatingly demonstrates that Kertzer is apparently ignorant of the major sources for the pontificates he presumably studied, and gravely distorts a number of minor sources, making his book virtually worthless as historical scholarship (While We're At It, March). None of that bothers Wistrich. It is enough that Kertzer's book serves the purposes of his ongoing campaign. In the same review, Wistrich discusses Jose M. Sanchez's *Pius XII and the Holocaust*. "It is also unfortunate," he writes, "that Sanchez concludes his otherwise valuable survey by implying that many critics of Pius XII have an ax to grind against the papacy or the Church." Who could Sanchez possibly have in mind? Wistrich was part of the Catholic-Jewish Historical Commission, and Vatican officials reproached him for torpedoing the commission's work by his egregious public criticisms. Wistrich describes the Vatican reproach as an instance of "absurd conspiracy theories out of the repertoire of classical anti-Semitism." No, he was reproached for violating the rules of the commission of which he was part; and yes, he is a Jew; and no, that does not make the reproach anti-Semitic. And there were no "conspiracy theories," absurd or otherwise. By his obsessive ax-grinding, Wistrich has thoroughly discredited himself as a scholar and putative authority on Christianity and anti-Semitism. Very different is the review of Kertzer in the *New York Review of Books* by Owen Chadwick of Cambridge, who is an authority on the history of the papacy. Kertzer, writes Chadwick, wrongly assumes, first, that anything done or said by Catholic priests (many of whom have been anti-Semitic) represents papal policy. Second, he writes, "the more damning parts of the book rest on arguments from silence." He points out that the Pope did not condemn the Allied obliteration bombing of Dresden—a blatant war crime—which can hardly be taken to mean that the Pope approved of it. Third, Kertzer attributes to the Vatican statements made by Catholics overtly in opposition to, and condemned by, the Vatican. Fourth, Kertzer criticizes Pius XII for helping only some Jews, to which Chadwick asks the commonsensical question, "Is it safe to infer from this that the Pope, because he helped a small number of people, could not have wished to help a larger number of people if he or his advisers thought that to be possible?" "The Holocaust," Chadwick declares, "was born in Germany, with roots in the German nineteenth century. It was not born in the last years of dilapidated papal [states of] Rome. Nor was it born in the anti-Semitism of some members of the clergy." He very generously concludes with the allowance that Kertzer's book is nonetheless "valuable" and "makes a case that calls for an answer." After critiques such as Hittinger's and Chadwick's, one has to wonder whether any further answer might not be an instance of overkill.

■ An article in the *Christian Century* argues for the "right of return" for more than a half million Palestinians to what is presently the State of Israel. Marc Ellis is quoted favorably: "This future of integration, under two flags or one, will one day see the creation of a new identity for Jews and Palestinians in Israel Palestine that will carry aspects of each people's past and elements of joint experiences forged in blood, struggle, and solidarity." A "new identity," as in defeated Jews and triumphant Arabs. It would be more straightforward to call for the death of the State of Israel. Which, not incidentally, is what its enemies have been calling for over the last fifty-four years, and call for today.

■ Melle Pufe is a big advertising agency in Germany that has had great success in promoting the Afri-Cola soft drink and various tobacco products. The Evangelical (Lutheran) Church is a new client, and Melle Pufe is launching a huge campaign centered on the motto, "Protestants Ask Questions." If you're looking for questions, go to church this Sunday. Barbara Kotte, creative director of the agency, says Protestantism is a "problematic brand" because it has no pope or other symbol to "feature the church's history and identity." Billboards in a hundred cities will display the campaign's motto. I'm sure ecumenical sensibilities will preclude putting up next to them billboards declaring, "Catholics Have Answers."

■ The Brownback-Landrieu bill in the Senate is scheduled for early debate. It would ban all human cloning. Senators Ted Kennedy, Arlen Specter, and others are backing another bill, misleadingly called the "Human Cloning Prohibition Act." It allows "therapeutic cloning" while outlawing bringing such clones to birth in "reproductive cloning." J. Bottum, writing in the *Weekly Standard*, has got the number of these "prohibitionists." "The attempt to allow cloned embryos and then to ban the birth at which they naturally aim is a bizarre and unworkable compromise. How exactly could we enforce it without the courts ordering women to have abortions? How could we prosecute violators without an unattainable knowledge of a scientist's intention in creating a clone? And how could we call the compromise ethical when it would establish in law a class of embryos that it is a crime *not* to destroy, *not* to treat as disposable tissue? The attempt to ban only reproductive cloning will prove simply an invitation for scientists to get

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their techniques right until the pressure to bring one of those clones to birth becomes overwhelming. In truth, the only way to ban reproductive human cloning is by banning *all* human cloning, and the only bill now before the Senate that will do that is the Brownback-Landrieu bill." Bottum writes that the biotech project is like a giant jigsaw puzzle, the picture only becoming apparent after the fact. "But this is how the brave new world project advances. Each small piece of the jigsaw puzzle is held up by its advocates as though it existed in isolation, as though it implied nothing about what is to come. And then we are asked how we could possibly be opposed to it. Last year, it was how we could object to embryonic stem-cell research when that doesn't require cloning embryos for research. This year, it is how we can object to cloning embryos for research when that doesn't require bringing clones to birth. And next year, it will be how we can object to bringing clones to birth when that doesn't require the genetic redesign of our descendants." And, of course, a year or two after that comes the genetic redesign of our descendants. "Why not?" as the serpent said to Eve.

■ Remember "consciousness raising"? The phrase was big about thirty years ago, mainly in connection with the feminisms of the day. Yes, the activists admitted, most women do not view marriage as a trap or sex as rape, and they don't hate men as they should, but that is only because they don't understand their own oppression. They need to have their consciousness raised, and consciousness raising workshops sprang up all over the country. Now we have a similar thing with Indians. According to Native American activists and the wildly out of control U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, the use of Indian names, mascots, and symbols in sports is an outrageous offense against Native Americans. So *Sports Illustrated* hired the Harris Research Group to poll Native Americans, with the result showing that 81 percent favor the use of Indian nicknames for high school and college teams, while for professional sports the approval rate is 83 percent. The civil rights establishment is not deterred. Its response is, What do you expect from people who have not had their consciousness raised? Maybe the commission will find funds for reeducation workshops. "Ve know best. You vill be offended."

■ I earlier remarked on a Maine-based operation that sells "Brother Curry's Breads." These include pumpkin bread, date nut bread, blueberry ginger loaf, all baked "in the Jesuit tradition." The latest ad in *America* reads, "NEW!!! Brother Curry's Dog Biscuits." Also in the Jesuit tradition, of course. I feared it might come to this.

■ We all know about the Red and Blue Americas. The first voted overwhelmingly for Bush and the second overwhelmingly for Gore. (I've never heard a satisfactory explanation of how the colors were chosen for that famous map, since red has traditionally signified the left and blue the right, as in "true blue.") David Brooks, who is among our favorite observers of the American follies, examines what are supposedly two Americas in the *Atlantic Monthly*. His article, "One Nation, Slightly Divisible," based on his comparison of upmarket, and very Blue, Montgomery County, Maryland (where he lives), and downmarket, and very Red, Franklin County, Pennsylvania, about sixty-five miles north. He did his admittedly unscientific research before and after September 11. Among his findings is that neither class warfare nor culture warfare explains much of anything. There are big differences in religious belief and observance, but the real divide is what he calls "the ego curtain." The liberal Blues in Montgomery County think they are very big and special, while folks in Franklin County insist they are small and very ordinary. Brooks concludes with this: "If the September 11 attacks rallied people in both Red and Blue America, they also neutralized the political and cultural leaders who tend to exploit the differences between the two. Americans are in no mood for a class struggle or a culture war. The aftermath of the attacks has been a bit like a national Sabbath, taking us out of our usual pleasures and distractions and reminding us what is really important. Over time the shock will dissipate. But in important ways the psychological effects will linger, just as the effects of John F. Kennedy's assassination have lingered. The early evidence still holds: although there are some real differences between Red and Blue America, there is no fundamental conflict. There may be cracks, but there is no chasm. Rather, there is a common love for this nation—one nation in the end." I expect that's true after September 11, and we'll see how long it holds. But I also expect that Brooks is too ready to discount the reality of the culture war. On the "ego curtain," on the importance of religion, on marriage, family, and homosexuality, on abortion, on patriotism, and on much else, the cultural divide is very deep. What has happened since September 11 is that the Reds with their normative morality are dramatically in the ascendancy (although their principled humility prevents them from gloating about it) and the Blues with their expressive individualism have been temporarily sobered. Real crises tend to have that effect. The driven self-indulgence and blithe nihilism of Montgomery County is dependent upon being secure and affluent. There, and even more in New York City, the sense of security has been severely

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shaken. The people of Franklin County, on the other hand, did not really need the President to tell them, as he did in the State of the Union message, that there is evil in the world, that life is fragile and must therefore be grounded in truth—as in Truth. As has often been said in these pages, the aggressors in the culture war are the Blues. Deep down, it is more true than not that Harvard hates America. More precisely, Harvard hates America as it imagines it to be and wants to remake it in its own image. Blues are inclined to be not very nice when it comes to what they think is wrong with America, which is just about everything. Like sociologist Alan Wolfe in *One Nation, After All*, David Brooks has discovered that people in Red America, by way of sharp contrast, tend to be, with few exceptions, nice. In visiting "middle America" both Brooks and Wolfe admit to a sense of venturing into *terra incognita*. Both express surprise that these folk do not come across as angry partisans in the culture war. Of course not. They are nice. That doesn't mean they don't know what side they're on.

■ It is true, there are millions of evangelical Protestants who don't read FT. Also millions of Orthodox, Catholics, Jews, and people who aren't sure what they believe. In remedying this sad state of affairs, we suggest starting small. For instance, send us the names of friends and acquaintances who you think might subscribe, and we'll send them a free issue. Please send names and addresses to FIRST THINGS, 156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 400, New York, New York 10010 (or e-mail to subscriberservices@pma-inc.net). On the other hand, if they're ready to subscribe, call toll free 1-877-905-9920, or visit www.firstthings.com.

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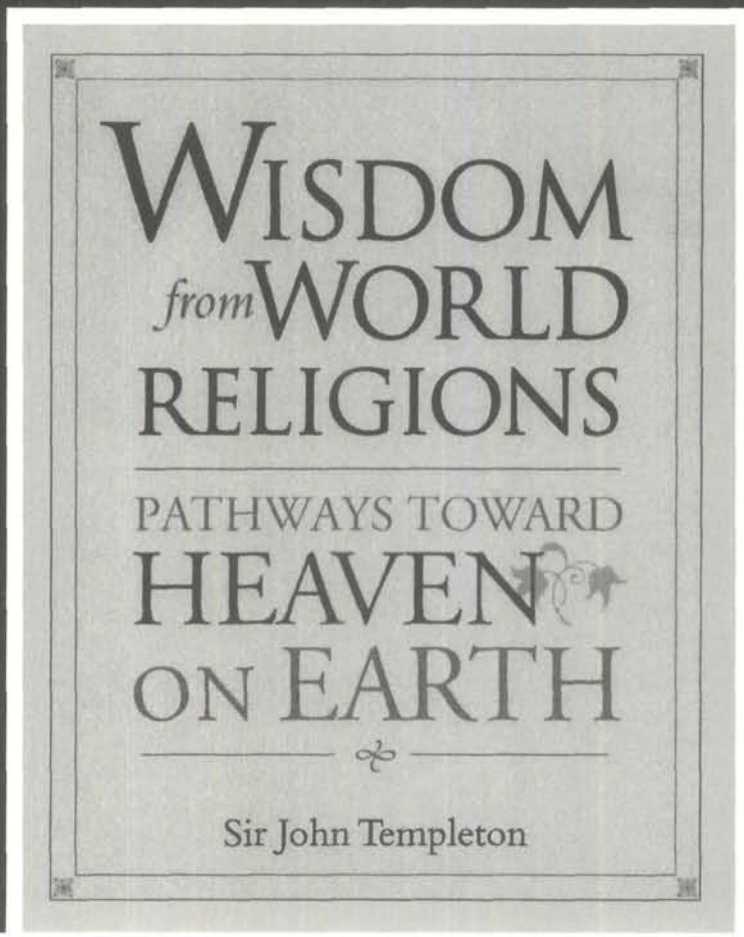

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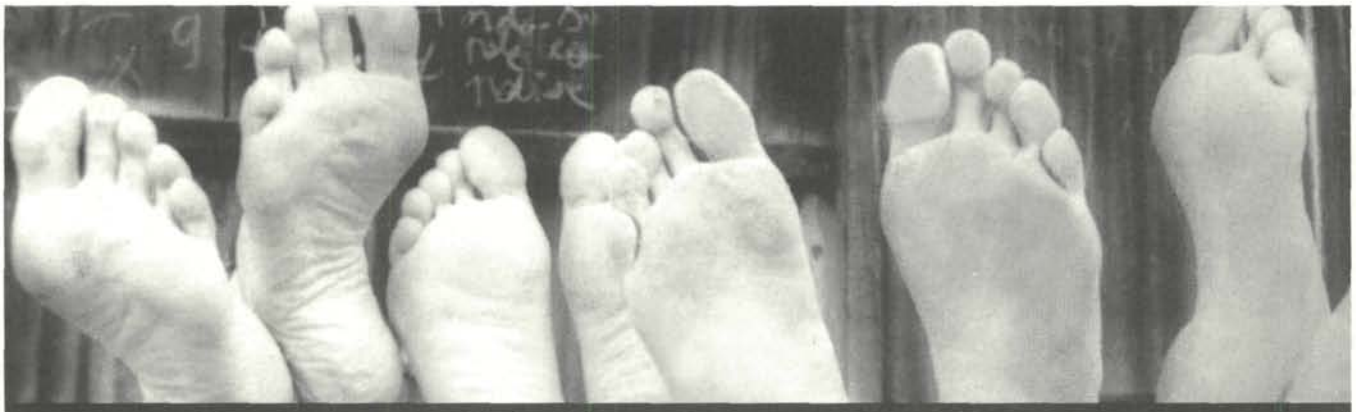

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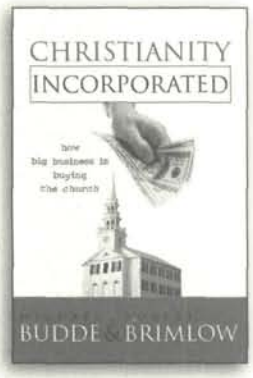

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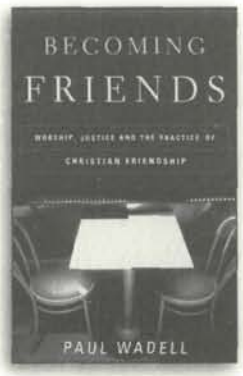

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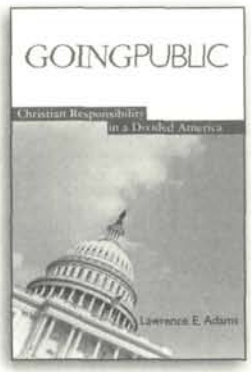

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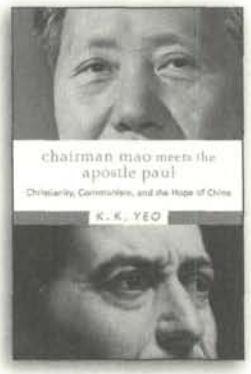

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